THE TEACHING OF RELIGION

RODERICK MACEACHEN

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THE TEACHING OF RELIGION

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THE TEACHING OF RELIGION

BY

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THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

WITH A PREFACE

BY

JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS

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PREFACE

BY

HIS EMINENCE, JAMES CARDINAL GIBBONS

Archbishop of Baltimore

WHEN we look about us to-day we are appalled at the evils that have crept into human society. The world is just passing through a crisis brought on by materialistic thought. These post-bellum times are called the reconstruction period. The great moral forces of the day are seeking a remedy for the ills of society.

Thoughtful men are beginning to realize that religion is the only cure for those ills. Now more than ever, perhaps, they are convinced that human society must be guided by a higher principle than mere human statutes. This principle must be divine law expressed in terms of religion that operates in men's lives.

Unfortunately many have come to look upon religion as a mere creed, a system of forms, a cold intellectual code. This faulty conception is due, at least in part, to our emphasis of theological

conclusions, our zeal to propagate the dogmas of Faith, thus making it appear that the intellectual is the all-important phase of religion.

The Apostle St. James (Ep. 1, 27) says: "Religion clean and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit the fatherless and the widows in their tribulation: and to keep one's self unspotted from this world." In this the Apostle wishes to say simply that charity is the soul of religion. In the same manner our divine Saviour Himself reduces religion to the single principle of love: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets." (St. Matt. 22, 37–40.)

It is for this reason that the author of this volume says: "Love is the essence of religion." This is his fundamental thesis. The dogmas of Faith, the truths, the practices, the Church, the Commandments, the Sacraments, all are but means of engendering love for God in the hearts of men.

"God placed man upon the earth for the sole purpose of learning to love Him," says the author; "the love of God is man's mission upon earth. But to love God we must know Him; the more

we understand God's love and bounty toward us the more we are impelled to love Him."

When we love God we are prompted to serve Him; for love moves us almost violently to do services for those whom we love. In revealed religion God has furnished us the means of serving Him and thus manifesting our love for Him. When we believe in Him we are serving Him. In the same manner we manifest our love for Him when we worship Him and keep His Commandments. But since God is our common Father we are all children united in one brotherhood. Hence we can show our love for God by our love and kindness for our fellow men. God permits some of His children to be poor, afflicted, distressed so that we can show our love for Him by caring for them.

This is the true concept of religion when viewed in its relation to men's lives. It is the newness of life of which St. Paul speaks. It elevates man above his own natural sphere and enables him to live according to the mind and heart of God. In the principles which the author here expounds for the teaching of religion these ideals are clearly set forth. He shows always the relation of religion to human life. He outlines the rules and principles by which zealous teachers may effectually

engender religion in the lives of God's little ones.

This work is undoubtedly destined to open up a new field of thought for religious teachers. Indeed it almost seems providential coming as it does in this critical epoch of the world's history. At a time when materialistic science has arrogated to itself the created world around us, this work so interweaves nature study with religious teaching as to make nature the open book that tells the secrets of God's love and bounty. In this it leads us back to the great works on nature such as the Hexameron, written by St. Ambrose in the fifth century. But it also takes us back to the Canticles of Azarias and his companions in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3, 52 ss.): "All ye works of the Lord, bless the Lord: praise and exalt Him above all forever. . . . O ye heavens . . . O all ye waters . . . O ye sun and moon . . . O ye stars of heaven . . . O every shower and dew bless the Lord: praise and exalt Him above all forever."

It was this kind of religion that made St. Francis a lover of nature. In the flowers and trees he saw the bounty and the glory of God depicted. He spoke to the little birds as his little brothers. All creatures were his fellow creatures of God.

But, besides nature study, the author's method

also embraces the study of Church history, the study of the Bible, and of Sacred Liturgy. He thus presents the truths of Faith in their true life setting; he makes them enflame the hearts of the little ones with love for God and their fellow man.

By this new method of teaching religion God becomes God with us, our Emmanuel. The true beauty of religion is thus developed in the lives of the children; they learn to live in union with God, united with Him by the bonds of pure love. May He, in His divine wisdom, bless this work abundantly and make it fruitful of much good unto many.

J. Card. Gibbons

Given at Baltimore,
The Feast of St. Elizabeth, 1920

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Religious Training	1
II.	The Content of Religious Teaching	10
III.	The Child and Religion	18
IV.	Religious Development of the Child	28
V.	By-methods and Materials	39
VI.	Story-telling and Literature	48
VII.	Behavior and Religion	58
VIII.	Character Building	70
IX.	The Rule of Positives	79
X.	Class Procedure in Religion	91
XI.	Class Management	102
XII.	Coördination	114
XIII.	The Presentation of the Matter	127
XIV.	God	140
XV.	Divine Revelation	150
XVI.	The Commandments: First to Third	161
XVII.	The Commandments: Fourth to Tenth	173
XVIII.	Sin	187
XIX.	The Incarnation	197
XX.	The Catholic Church; Divine Grace	208
XXI.	The Sacraments — Part I	219
XXII.	The Sacraments — Part II	232

THE
TEACHING OF RELIGION

CHAPTER I

Religious Training

Religion is the bond of union between God and man; it is the union of love. Religious teaching embraces the threefold sphere of knowledge, feeling, and conduct; it is intended to enable men to know, love, and serve God. Religious training, therefore, imparts a newness of life (Rom. 6, 4). The knowledge of God creates a new mode of thought in the human mind; the love of God elevates man to a new plane of feeling; the service of God changes the character of man's conduct, transfers it from the mere natural to the supernatural.

Religion gives man his proper adjustment to life; it makes clear the meaning of his own life, his own intrinsic value; it teaches him his proper attitude to his fellow man; it manifests to him his true relation to God. Religion is not a

separate branch of human knowledge; it is not a science apart; it permeates all branches of knowledge and all phases of human life. Religious training imparts a noble character; it lifts man up to association with God, and it makes him a child of God and a brother to all mankind. It gives him high aspirations and noble standards of life; it elevates man from the natural to the supernatural order by grace and by the quest of his eternal destiny.

Religion reveals to man the true worth and beauty of the material world; it puts true meaning in the beauties and glories of nature. To the man truly trained in religion every atom of the universe reflects God's love and bounty. Religion unfolds to us the true meaning of life; it destroys pessimism and despair. Life, in the light of religion, becomes not a mere struggle for the unattainable, but a sturdy manifestation of courage and fortitude in preparation for eternal life. Death loses its unreason when it is viewed as a "going home" to our heavenly Father. Thus religion is necessary for man's well-being, physical and spiritual. Without it he cannot adjust himself to the ills and vicissitudes of life; without it there is no consolation in the face of death; without it the mind of man

cannot be resigned to the ravages of age that follow in the wake of youth.

Religion alone can explain the problem of evil. Misery, sorrow, and pain can have full retribution in the future life alone. Full retribution must come with the attainment of our destiny. Ours is a supernatural destiny. Man's perfection is happiness; this happiness he will not find except in an eternal union with God. Religion guides man in the attainment of his last end and destiny; it enables him to live the life that leads to his eternal destiny. In the natural order, that life is perfect which is fashioned after the dictates of mere human reason. But the life of man, in view of his supernatural destiny, is perfect only when it follows the rule of reason guided by divine truth. Hence it is that *religious training is the coördination of divine truth with human life.*

If, then, rational life is composed of *knowledge*, *feeling*, and *conduct*, divine truth must enter into every phase of these three spheres. Religion added to these three spheres of human life elevates them to a new plane. The natural man sees the sun, moon, and stars in the heavens. To him they are wondrous natural phenomena. But the supernatural man sees reflected in the

heavenly bodies the love, power, and glory of an all-loving God. The mere natural man can have pity on his fellow man. But he lacks the motive of love. The supernatural man loves his fellow man because both are children of a common Father in heaven.

It is a grave mistake to suppose that religious teaching consists in the communication of forms and precepts. *It is a training unto life.* Like all true education, religious education must follow the natural development of the child. The divine truths of faith are defined indeed. But even the laws of natural life and of nature itself are clearly determined. We must breathe to live. This is a fixed law of life; yet the child breathes long before it learns to formulate this *dogma* of life. All heavy bodies tend toward the center of the earth; yet the little girl knows that she must keep her doll from falling long before she can define the *dogma* of gravitation. It is thus with the knowledge of God. The little child should know God as our Father long before he can grasp the meaning of the Creator. The child knows that God gives all little children to their father and mother. God made the flowers, the plants, the trees. God made the earth to be a dwelling place for His children; He made the sun to give

us light and heat; He made the moon, the stars. All this the child knows before he understands the term "omnipotent."

In its natural life the child feels love and affection long before the idea or the term that expresses the idea occurs to it. In like manner the love of God, like the love of loving parents, must grow in the heart of the child. It is that constant and ceaseless series of tender actions that implants deep in the soul of the child that indelible sense of home love. Thus, too, everything about the child must speak to it of God's love. God gave us a father and mother to care for us because He loves us. God made the pretty flowers to make us happy because He loves us. God taught the little birds to sing because He loves us. It is the progression of the child in love; each step of the way through life he is confronted with manifestations of God's love.

Likewise conduct must be a gradual growth based upon motives that arise from knowledge and experience. The little child learns that it is a physical evil to put its little hand upon a hot stove. Experience has told it that such action will cause pain. It learns to follow the advice of its parents because it has learned to love them. It learns to care for its own body and mind because

it learns that it is good to do so. This will give it joy and strength. Thus, too, it must learn the art of true Christian conduct and morality. Motives of good must be engendered in its heart by the light and warmth of divine truth. It must so learn to love God that it will endeavor to adjust its life to His will. It must learn *by doing.* To enable it to live the life of an upright man it must live the life of an upright child. Its own will must act; it cannot develop will and character by the exercise of another's will.

All religion can be reduced to God's love; love is the essence of religion. It may be called mutual love between God and man. It is for this reason that religion is strong enough to overcome the world; for love is stronger than all the other forces in life. God created us so that He might love us. He made us rational creatures so that we might love Him and love one another; for the rational creature alone is capable of loving. God made this wondrous universe out of pure love for us. The earth is our dwelling filled with beauty and bounty. The heavens are bedecked with millions of stars and planets to reveal to us the lovable attributes of God.

God revealed Himself to us because He loves us. He is a loving Father telling His own per-

sonal secrets to His children. He gave us the Church out of love for us; for it is the Church that teaches His revealed truth to us. God sent the angels to watch over us because He loves us. He is the loving Father solicitous for His children on the dangerous way of life. He sends His glorious angels to accompany us. "Behold, I will send my angels, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey" (Exodus 22, 20). God has prepared an eternal home for us; there we shall dwell with Him in endless bliss. He wants us all to be with Him forever because He loves us. Our destiny is an eternal union of love with God. And even the revealed truth of hell manifests God's love for us. He is a tender Father warning His children against danger, eternal danger. He trembles with love lest His children turn away from Him in sin.

To mark out the *way home* more clearly our heavenly Father gives us the Commandments; they are the signposts along the way to eternity; and the way is the road of love. Two things only are necessary; the Ten Commandments comprise but two commandments of love. Our divine Saviour Himself gave us this interpretation: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole

mind. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments dependeth the whole law and the prophets" (St. Matt. 22, 37–39).

But man had turned away from God to love creatures; he had sinned. Then God the Son in His love came down from heaven, became man to lead us back to love. It was love alone that prompted the Redemption. And to show how intimate is His love for the human race, God chose an earthly mother from our midst. By His divine grace He elevated her above the angels of heaven. Furthermore, He made her our mother that we might have even the influence of mother love to lead us to our heavenly home.

Not satisfied with all this God gave us a new life of a higher order. He gave us the life of divine grace by which we become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Ep. of St. Peter 1, 4). Thus we might perform works meritorious in eternity. To convey, preserve, and nourish this supernatural life within us, God gave us seven Sacraments. Baptism is the regeneration in this supernatural life of grace. Confirmation is the strengthening of its powers. The Holy Eucharist is the divine food for this life. Penance furnishes the remedies for its ills. Holy Orders is the ministry that pre-

serves it in the faithful. Matrimony is the institution that furnishes the home in which to nourish it. Extreme Unction gives the strength and the courage necessary for the journey to our eternal home. Thus divine grace and the Sacraments are godlike gifts of divine love.

Wherefore religion might even be called a coördination of supernatural life with human life. Divine truth gives divine wisdom to the human intellect. The ordering of our life according to the will of God makes our actions supernatural.

Religion alone puts meaning into human life. Why all this struggle for happiness if it be found only to fade away? Where is the optimism of life with death everywhere in the background? Why all this labor for education if it must be so soon buried in the grave of corruption? Religion alone can answer these questions. It alone can put abiding hope in the heart of man. It alone can unfold the true dignity of man. Religion is the soul, the life of education; it alone can give men motives stronger than their mere natural desires; it alone can make men truly just, noble, and true.

CHAPTER II

The Content of Religious Teaching

Religion was divinely given to man in his present fallen state; it is intended to fit unto his nature; it must produce newness of life in him. Furthermore, it was designed by God Himself for all men, learned and unlearned, great and simple alike. Wherefore, its teachings must, at the same time, satisfy the demands both of the high and of the humble; they must respond even to the requirements of little minds just budding into reason.

There is a real distinction between the teachings of faith applied to life and the teachings of faith as expressed in terms of theology. This distinction is similar to the difference between an everyday knowledge of life and the science of biology. As a matter of common experience there is nothing on earth simpler than life; but as a scientific study it is the most profound of human sciences. Thus it is with religion. From the standpoint of our lives, it is simple enough for the tenderest of little minds; but in its scientific form of theological

conclusions it is comprehensible to the erudite alone. Thus the truths of faith may be viewed from a speculative or from a practical standpoint.

But truth that is to affect our lives must be studied in its practical form; it must be studied from the standpoint of life. It is thus only that the divine truth of religion can operate in men's souls unto a newness of life. In view of this, religious teaching may be divided into five phases, all of which make one body of teaching. They are: (1) the truths of faith in themselves; (2) the truths of faith as expressed in the material world; (3) the truths of faith as written in the Bible; (4) the truths of faith as expressed in human life through Church history; (5) the truths of faith as symbolized and transmitted in sacred Liturgy.

Nature is the open book of God wherein all may read the power and the bounty and the love of God. Hence nature study is an integral part of religious teaching: "The heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hands" (Psalms 18, 2). All nature must speak to us of God. The earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the planets, all show forth God's power and bounty. The plants, the trees bring forth fruits in season. The animals,

the fishes of the sea are all manifestations of God's love and care for us.

"But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the birds of the air, and they shall tell thee.

"Speak to the earth, and it shall answer thee; and the fishes of the sea shall tell.

"Who is ignorant that the hand of the Lord hath made all these things?

"In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the spirit of all flesh of man" (Job 12, 7–10).

Modern science is largely concerned with natural phenomena. So wondrous are the works of nature that men have often deified them; they have mistaken the gift for the giver; they have ignored God in His own work. "But all men are vain, in whom there is not the knowledge of God; and who by these good things that are seen could not understand Him that is (God), neither by attending to the works have not acknowledged who was the workman" (Wisdom 13, 1).

Just as the children learn in infancy to understand the position of father and mother in the home so must they learn to recognize God in the universe. Every flower, every blade of grass must speak to them of God's love. The idea of God must be associated with all things in the world;

all study of natural phenomena must be coördinated with the teaching of religion. Even if the children eventually study biology, geology, astronomy, and other profound sciences they must find God in all their investigations. We see the painter in his painting; we see the author in his book; even so we must see God in His work of creation. It is not enough, however, to teach the children that God is the Creator of heaven and earth. They must know that God made every individual thing around them. Step by step they must learn the love and bounty of God. Every new idea that they acquire concerning the universe must be associated with the idea of God. Thus as they become acquainted gradually with the world around them they progress, by the same token, in the knowledge of God.

Bible study is an integral part of religious teaching. Here we have the written expression of divine truth. The Bible is the book written by God; it was He who dictated every word to those holy men who wrote it. He wished to leave us a written testimony of His divine truth. Here the same truth that nature proclaims is written for us; it is the word of God Himself. The children must early learn to know this source of truth. When they have learned that God created us, it is good

to know that they can read God's own account of man's creation in the book of Genesis. There, too, they can read God's own testimony that He created the world and all that it contains. From the knowledge of these things their interests naturally extend to the Book in which they are described by God Himself. It is thus we interweave Bible study with religious teaching. It is not a systematic study of the Bible that we give in the early courses; it is a natural acquaintance that we enable them to make with the different books of the Bible and their contents; it is the practical knowledge of the sacred Scriptures related to their knowledge.

Church history reveals the truths of religion in the lives of men and nations. Man is naturally interested in the lives of other men. In the lives of historical characters are manifested the power and the glory of Christian teaching. The Apostles go forth upon their divine mission to preach the Gospel; their courage and fortitude are an inspiration to us. They lived and labored and died for the same holy faith that we love. The saints and martyrs gladly gave their lives for our own holy faith. These and all the great personages of history teach us by their lives and example the true meaning of our holy religion.

But it is not the direct religious teaching alone that the children get from Church history; they learn to know the Church. They learn to know its great work among the nations of the world throughout nineteen centuries. The historical argument is practically the only one that is accepted by those outside the Church to-day. The philosophical, the theological, and the scriptural arguments have been largely rejected by our separated brethren. Hence it behooves us to acquaint the coming generation with the truths of Church history; chiefly herein lies our hope to enable them to defend the faith.

Sacred Liturgy is the dramatization, as it were, of divine truth. The Church possesses a beautiful ceremonial and ritual. The ceremonial of the Church is the expression of Christian worship that has come down to us through the centuries; it is rich with symbolism and meaning. This must be made manifest to our children if they are to love divine worship. They must become familiar with the deep religious meaning that underlies our signs and ceremonies. Just as the drama is an effective means of expressing human sentiments, so sacred Liturgy expresses the sentiments of Christian worship. Just as our homes are arranged and adorned to express our natural

tastes and preferences, so the church edifice expresses our religious life; its form and structure have their liturgical meaning. The altar, the altar steps, the altar cloths, the candles, the vestments, the sacred vessels, all bear a mystic meaning to us.

The Sacraments are administered with prayers and ceremonies that are filled with religious sentiment. The sacred oils, holy chrism, holy water, crosses, relics, all have a tender lesson for us couched in the blessing they bring. The ritual is replete with blessings in the forms of which are expressed beautiful sentiments. There are blessings for the fruits of the earth, for eatables, for animals, for fields, for machines, for wells, for houses, for railroads, for telegraph, for electric plants. All these are intended to promote the spiritual well-being of our people and bring God's blessing upon their concerns. When our children know all this they will understand better how eager God is to give us His blessing; they will understand better the meaning of religion in their lives. Liturgy must be taught in its proper relation to the lives of the children; it must be given its due position in the teaching of religion.

All these branches of study add interest to the teaching of religion; they add a richness of detail; they enliven the doctrines of faith, making them

warm, vivid, and interesting. In the elementary courses the mere rudiments of Bible study, Church history, and religion can be given. Then, too, nature study cannot be more than a practical knowledge of natural phenomena. These branches of study, however, should advance apace with the progress of religious teaching.

This is a different concept of religious teaching from that generally accepted to-day. It departs from the intellectualism that has prevailed. For the past three centuries and a half our catechisms have dealt almost exclusively with the intellectual side of religion; they have been, for the most part, mere digests of theology. The truths of faith are there set down with great precision; but they are given apart from life in set forms and expressions. The children have been allowed to learn the practical life-giving truth from the lives and example of others. Of course, they have been zealously taught in both church and school by exhortation to practice their religion. But religion taught from the standpoint of the child's life should engender the motives for faith and piety within him. Taught from this angle these truths should form the motivation of his whole life. In this way the child should learn not only to know but to *do* the truth.

CHAPTER III

The Child and Religion

God puts religion in the heart of the child at creation. This is called natural religion because it is implanted in the very nature of man. Then, at Baptism the virtues are infused into the soul of the child. This child, endowed by nature with religion and adorned in Baptism with infused virtues, is the subject of our religious training. It is indeed a germinal form of religion that is implanted in him; and they are germinal virtues that are given him at his Baptism. Yet this natural religion forms the basis of his religious life; it need but be developed to enable him to live a true Christian life, and the infused virtues, when properly cultivated, will fit him for a virtuous life upon earth. By these endowments the child is prepared for our teaching. God Himself by a creative act and by His holy Sacrament of Baptism has planted the seed of religion and virtue in the heart of the child. Thus we find a subject prepared by nature and endowment for our reli-

gious teaching. The child is disposed in an especial manner to receive the truths of faith and apply them to his life.

Man, it is true, fell from his high estate of original justice by the sin of Adam. But *human nature was not intrinsically corrupted by the fall.* Original sin darkens the understanding and weakens the will of all men born into the world. Because of this men are prone to evil. Thus it is only with the development of rational life in the child that evil may appear; for it is the rational faculties that were weakened by sin. The Sacrament of Baptism removes the taint of original sin from the soul of the child. The Church teaches that the child is thereby restored to innocence and justice and that if the child die before he reach the use of reason he is ripe for heaven. Wherefore the little child in the pre-rational period of life is pure and holy. It is only when he begins to follow the guidance of his own darkened intellect and his own weakened will that his inclination to evil appears.

It is precisely to save him from these evil inclinations that God gave us positive religion. Positive religion must supply both the darkness of the intellect and the weakness of the will. God instituted our holy religion, not for the angels,

not for man in his original justice, but for fallen man; it is given to lead man back to justice and to eternal life.

These are consoling truths that should encourage us in our sublime work of educating children in religion. But a study of the child will reveal the same truths to us. See the life of the little one. How early he begins his quest for God! Listen to his questions: What keeps the stars up in the sky? What makes it rain? What makes it dark at night? What makes the wind blow? How did the little bird learn to sing? These are all religious questions. It is the little human being just turning his thoughts to the wonders of God's universe; he is gazing on creation and asking for the Creator.

How well the little one manifests the virtues that have been infused in his soul. For his faith, he believes unto a fault. In his simplicity, he accepts as true all that he is told. Then, too, how his little life is filled with hope. Pessimism and despair have no place in the heart of the child; for he knows how to laugh through his tears. But most clearly of all, perhaps, the virtue of charity is manifest in the child. He is filled with tenderness, love, affection, sympathy, generosity.

"Fénelon,[1] speaking of the child's striking grace which we call simplicity, says that it is the pearl of the Gospel for which men sought in distant lands. Unwittingly by his simplicity the child inspires the highest virtue. He believes all things; he hopes all things; he seeks all that is lovable and good; he admires all that is great and noble; he does not suspect evil; he is not envious of good. He rejoices with all that are happy. If you love him, he will give you his heart. If you appear to be virtuous, he will venerate you. He acts without ulterior motives, without malice, without bitterness, and there is no sarcasm in him. At the mere recital of a generous deed his heart throbs and his face is aglow. His tears flow at the sight of misfortune. Instinctively he recognizes suffering even before it is expressed. His glance is ever ready to find the poor beggar by the wayside; his hand is always the first stretched forth to help him.

"No, I am not surprised that Jesus Christ, when His disciples were disputing which of them should be greater in the kingdom of heaven, I am not surprised that He called a little child, embraced him, placed him among them and said: 'Amen, I say to you unless you be converted, and become

[1] L'Enfant, Dupanloup, pp. 38–40.

as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven'" (St. Matt. 18, 5).

It is of vital importance to know the child; for thus only can we hope to understand the character of our work. And indeed it is most important to know whether our training is to be remedial or preservative. But knowing the heart of the child, we understand that our teaching must preserve and develop the virtues that are there. Happy beyond expression is he who has preserved the innocence of childhood. Accepting the innocence and goodness of the child, the teacher readily sees the attitude she should maintain toward the child. She should treat him as a creature endowed with an eternal destiny, as a being in whose immortal soul the grace of God has already germinated. She should look upon him as a child of God seeking, by his own little lights, for his heavenly Father.

If, at times, the little ones seem to show malice in their actions it is but their blundering in the twilight of reason. These manifestations should be for us not an occasion of repression or rebuke — no more than we would reprimand the toddler for his tumbles — but they should be a signal for help and encouragement. The child needs courage, especially when he first begins to act in the

light of his own little reason, guided by his own tender will. It is the function of the teacher to be near him as a sturdy friend with the tenderness of a devoted mother guiding the first steps of her child.

We must respect the child. He is filled with tender sensibilities. To him a harsh word may be a more serious injury than would be a blow in the face of an adult. His sensitive nature feels the slightest lack of consideration or kindness. But we must do more than respect his feelings; we must respect his person. We must treat him with all politeness and esteem. Thus only can we hope to maintain in him that saving quality of self-respect. To deal wisely with the child requires great prudence. The child is like a tender flower the growth of which may be blighted by a mere touch. The child is naturally imitative; he will follow our example more readily than our admonitions. Wherefore we must enact for the child the life we would have him learn from our teaching.

The teacher must be the servant of the child. She must be ready at his beck to minister to his wants. She must become little for the littleness of the child, simple for the simplicity of the child; she must adapt herself to the life of the child.

To do this requires the virtue of humility and the virtue of patience; but above all it requires love. The success of our teaching depends largely on the quality of our love for the little ones. Teaching to be effective must be lovable to the children. Hence if we would train our children in religion we must make religion lovable to them. But things lovable may be rejected when they are presented in an unlovable manner. Wherefore if we would make religion lovable to the children we must love them with a sane and unselfish love. Drudgery is never lovable. Hence the children must be spared all drudgery in their study of religion; it must be a joy and a pleasure for them.

The teacher should ever be cheerful. It is not always easy to be cheerful — until the habit of cheerfulness has been formed. Cheerfulness is a human virtue; it acts in our lives as does the soft sunshine of morning upon nature. There is a remarkable plea for cheerfulness written about the middle of the second century: "Cast off sadness and worry and do not offend the Holy Ghost who dwells in thee. — Put on therefore cheerfulness which is always pleasing and acceptable to God, and rejoice therein" (The Shepherd of Hermas). Cheerfulness is contagious. By a little

suggestion the children can be kept in a cheerful mood. When they have cultivated the human virtue of cheerfulness it will be easier for them to practice the divine virtue of charity.

To make others happy is a noble aspiration; it should be the ambition of every Christian. Faith and virtue should bring joy and cheer even into lives of suffering. Facial expression has a meaning in life. The face ordinarily reflects the disposition of the soul. Hope should leave a smile ever ready to play about the mouth. The light of love and virtue should gleam from eyes softened by human sympathy. The voice can be made the echo of love. It is not difficult to cultivate a pleasing and sweet-toned voice and it is a great treasure.

The soul of the child is like a melodious instrument and the teacher is the musician. Her voice is the song that accompanies her playing; it must be attuned to the sweetness of the instrument. How much the product of that instrument depends upon the player! This is the rule of the teacher: to bring out the best that is in the child. To do this she must have confidence in the child; she must ever give him the benefit of the doubt; she must ever attribute good motives to him. Above all things she must never shame the child.

The teacher must practice forbearance. The child is filled with activity and buoyancy. It is but natural that children should be, at times, mischievous. These outbursts of misconduct present the material upon which the teacher is to work. They are the force and the activity that have been placed at her disposal; it is her function to utilize and cultivate this energy. If a child seems rebellious he may be merely misunderstood. Then the rebellious spirit, when it appears, can rarely resist kindness.

It is true, children are sometimes neglected at home. They may be living in the midst of scandal and sin. But these conditions are beyond the sphere of the teacher; she should observe great delicacy about such family matters. If the child must bear the stigma of parental shame or ignorance, the teacher should be a devoted and considerate friend to help him bear it. In such cases the teacher should be even more gentle and kind than usual. She should be more indulgent to the poor child who has been deprived of home training. Then she may hope to supply the saving influences that are lacking in the life of the child.

The teacher should have sympathy for the child; she should enter into his interests; she should try to understand his childish viewpoints;

she should be for him a tried and trusted friend. Thus she will reflect the love and tenderness of religion; she will be a fitting instrument of divine love; she will be worthy to lead the little ones to Christ.

CHAPTER IV

Religious Development of the Child

Every living creature of earth grows to the fullness of life by its own natural development. It is thus man must arrive at the fullness of rational and spiritual life. There is a close analogy between the physical and the rational life of man. Through nourishment and the exercise of his bodily powers the child grows in physical strength. By knowledge and by the exercise of his mental powers the child grows unto rational life. Knowledge, in its broadest sense, is the nurture of the mind. But, like the body, the mind must be nurtured according to its own proper laws of development.

The physical child grows and thrives then only when he receives the food and exercise which his physical constitution demands. Both food and exercise must be measured to the organs and strength of the child. If he takes too much or too little food or exercise his development will be impeded. If he takes food that he cannot digest or exercise that overtaxes his strength his health will be impaired. It is thus with the mind.

The child must partake of knowledge suited to his own mental powers. No other knowledge save that which he can assimilate will benefit him. All other knowledge will be injurious to him; it will be like so much undigested food in the stomach. Then, too, if he would save his mental faculties from atrophy, he must exercise them; but this exercise must never overtax his capacity.

Wherefore it is clear that we must adapt our teaching to the mind of the child; it must be suited to his present needs. The child cannot take knowledge to-day to serve for to-morrow, no more than he can take food to be digested the following week. Indeed he takes nourishment to-day to give him more strength to-morrow; but the norm of nurture is the regulated appetite of the moment. Our training, then, should enable the child to live his present life. It is by living his present life properly that he can be fitted for his life of the future. The little child learns to go about the streets of the city in later life by toddling about the nursery. Thus the child must find religion in his own little world of childhood if he is to find it later in the great world of life.

She, therefore, who would guide the religious life of the child must enter into the child world. She must bring her teaching down to the plane of

the child's experience. She must keep ever within the sphere of the child's interests. Mere attention is often mistaken for interest. Indeed children may listen with rapt attention to you though they be not interested in what you are saying. Attention may be commanded; but interests grow.

Religion should be the guiding principle in all the affairs of men; it should be associated with all their interests in life. It is for this reason we would go down into the child's little interests and help him to establish them upon the basis of religion. Adult interests have little or no meaning for children except in their point of contact with their lives. Hence it is patently futile to attempt to foster upon children a store of adult knowledge.

The mind of the teacher must work in unison with the mind of the child. She must stoop to the littleness of the child and seek to encourage and help him in his little mental struggles. She must moderate her own zeal and eagerness to the tenderness and weakness of the young minds which she seeks to direct. She must measure her pace to the pace of the child.

The child should grow slowly and gradually in religion. He should learn divine truth as he acquires his everyday knowledge. He should learn to see its bearing upon every thought, word,

and deed of his life; it must become the guiding principle of his life. Life is a series of problems; it is man's business in the world to solve these problems. The dumb animals have their problems solved for them; they are guided by blind instinct in working out their destiny. But the rational creature is given a faculty by which to solve his own problems of life.

We are continually solving, or attempting to solve, problems by the process of our thoughts. But the problems of life practically all fall within the sphere of religion. For religion embraces the whole arena of life and death; it enters into our own being; it determines our relations to our Creator; it marks our attitude toward the universe; it supplies the norms for all our dealings with our fellow man. Faith gives us the principles with which to solve the problems of life. The divine truths of faith are to our lives what the axioms and theorems are in Euclid. It is not enough to know these axioms and theorems to be a geometrician. Even so it does not suffice for a Christian life to know the truths of faith.

These truths must be applied to our lives; they are, as it were, a super-reason added to natural reason to enable us to solve the problems of life. But the child who would learn mathematics must

solve his own problems. Even so the child must develop in religion by the exercise of his own powers. He must learn to solve the problems of child life so that later he will be able to solve the problems of adult life. This he must do in accord with the truths of faith. Religious training, then, is the application of divine truth to the life of the child. But the child himself must make the application if he is to grow in religion.

This leads to the consideration of methods in teaching religion. Now there are three modes of engendering knowledge in the minds of others: (1) by exciting thought on the part of the pupil; (2) by suggestion; (3) by direct communication. These three modes of imparting knowledge are here given in their order of importance.

Naturally knowledge that is a product of the child's own thought and reflection is of most value to him. Not only is it assimilated knowledge, but it is mental exercise which directly promotes the development of the child. Hence the child's thought process must be the prime factor in his religious training. Suggestion and direct communication are but aids to the child's thought and reflection. The imagination, which is strong in children, will serve to enliven their thought and reflection. Then, too, the child possesses intuition

which often enables him to divine the truth. All this mental power must be set to work for the solution of life problems. If the teacher can suggest the problem, she should not communicate it directly. If she can lead to the solution by mere suggestion, it is better than direct communication. Thus always as much as possible is left to the powers of the child.

To attain these purposes of religious teaching we have given the questioning method a prominent place in our early courses. It is true the questions actually present the problems to the mind of the child. The questions are generally so formed as to suggest the solution, and the progression of thought in the questions also facilitates the finding of the correct solution. However, the skillful teacher will often be able to bring the problems to the minds of the children without the questions. If she can do this, it is all for the better. But this will by no means detract from the utility of the questions set down. Here the subject matter is prepared in its relation to the life of the child.

In disposing the subject matter the great problems of life have been divided and subdivided into a multitude of little problems suited to the child mind. When the child begins to learn arithmetic he busies himself with such little problems as 1

plus 2, 2 plus 2, 2 plus 3. Eventually he learns to solve long and complicated problems. It is thus in religion. The great problem of life and existence, taken as a whole, might be solved by the expression: "God is the Giver of life, the Creator of all things." But to the little mind this solution might be as complicated and as unintelligible as the solution of an involved problem in trigonometry is to the pupil just beginning arithmetic.

The great problem of creation has no place in the life of the little child. He is, however, interested in the things of his own little world. He might readily learn to solve such problems as these: Who gave you your father and mother? Who makes the trees grow? Who made the stars? Thus the great problem of creation may be divided into numberless little problems. Not only are these little problems within the capacity of the child mind, but they have a meaning for the child. If they have been presented to him in their proper order, they interest him and they lead him to know and love God.

In our first course we began with the Lord's Prayer. It is supposed that children six years of age have learned this prayer and that they say it daily. Yet we do not intend to analyze

the Lord's Prayer; we would simply use it as the point of contact between God and their own little lives. Little children are home bodies; their experience is practically all confined to home life. This has its advantage for us when we undertake to present God to them so that He may take His place in their lives; for it enables us to present God as *our Father*. It is easy for the children to pass from the idea of their natural father to the idea of their heavenly Father. Thus we engage them in conversation about their natural father. All willingly they tell us about his love and his care for them.

At intervals one or the other is asked to say the Lord's Prayer. There God is called our Father. Again we take up the functions of a father. Then comes the problem of our origin. They are led back in thought to babyhood. God is in their mind. Then we ask: Who gave you to your father and mother? Surely it is easy. Then they pass to others. God gives all little babies to their father and mother; then it is but a step to the idea of where God got us; then another little step and we arrive at the truth: We are all God's children.

But children like to talk to their father. We like to talk with God. Here we have arrived at

the meaning of prayer. Henceforth prayer cannot be an empty form for them. When they pray they are talking, consciously talking, with their heavenly Father. The truth has germinated in them; all their life now this shall be a motivation for them.

But if we are all God's children we are all like brothers and sisters. All the people in the world form one great family of which God is Father. Here we have arrived at the universal brotherhood of man. The mind of the child has discovered it before he is able to name it. Thank God, the truth is there in the very foundation of his character. But if we are all like brothers and sisters, all members of one great family, we must love one another. God loves all His children. We love them all, too, because God loves them; and we love them because they are like our brothers and sisters. This is the simple form of that great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (St. Matt. 22, 39).

All this means the application of the truth to the lives of the children. As soon as they learn by reflection that God is our heavenly Father the truth becomes operative in their life. A motive for loving God has been planted in their heart; for surely children love their father. The motive

and the meaning of prayer have become part of their lives. Now they know why they should be kind to one another, help one another, love one another; for they are all children of one great family. It is thus we proceed throughout the whole course of religious teaching.

The questions are so arranged that the progression of thought is easy for the child. He is called upon to reflect a moment at times; but generally the solution of the little problem is clear to him. When he has become interested in a topic, certain questions present themselves to his mind. These make our direct communication effective. For we should tell the child that alone which he explicitly or implicitly wishes to know. Thus, for instance, when he has grasped the idea of divine revelation, certain questions naturally arise. Our heavenly Father has told us many things about Himself, about heaven, about the angels. It is as loving parents talk to their children. Now the children are naturally interested in knowing when and how God spoke to us. These are facts which they cannot discover for themselves; but their minds are open to receive them. Then as soon as we have communicated these facts to them we converse with the children about them. Thus they exercise their mind.

All the truths of faith can be thus simply brought into the lives of children. Nor need we scruple about forms and expressions; we are treating divine truth from the standpoint of life. When the children have thus assimilated the truth we need have no fear of their dogmatic precision; they will be able to state the great dogmas of faith with far greater accuracy than those who have merely conned formulæ by rote. It is training unto life; it is the development of the child in religion with the aid of his natural powers; it is the process of building up Christian character.

CHAPTER V

By-Methods and Materials

When children have learned to read they possess a new and highly useful means of acquiring knowledge. It is but natural that this accomplishment should be utilized in their religious training. Hence they should have a suitable textbook in religion. Now textbooks belong only to the third order of teaching modes, since they transmit knowledge by direct communication. The textbook in religion should not be taken as a treatise on religion to be conned and memorized. It should serve not as their teaching, but as the basis of their teaching. It should furnish food for thought to the minds of the children.

The textbook should be suited to the capacity of the children in each course. It should be written in the direct narrative in a simple and lucid style; it should present the teachings of faith from the viewpoint of the child. The children read the text in preparation for the lesson. This they do at home or at other times of study. In the recitation, the matter that the children have read is developed.

The children reflect upon the different problems that are suggested thereby and find their solution. This will have the added advantage of training the children to think upon their reading. They may not remember a single phrase from the text. Perhaps it is better so. But the facts which they have read will recur during the recitation. They will find these facts useful in their thought processes. Thus their interest will grow in the text and they will learn to reflect upon the sense of their reading.

Furthermore, the truths which they have read will be applied later more directly to their lives. This should enable them better to use their intellect in the regulation of their lives. Finally these matters which have been received in the intellectual order will be treated in the light of feeling and imagination. Indeed the imagination should also do its part in the religious development of the child. Children have a vivid imagination. The little boy, by the magic of phantasy, converts his father's cane into a prancing steed. The tiny doll mother attends to all manner of imaginary wants in the fictitious life of her porcelain child. At play children enact real life in the realm of phantasy. But it is a delightful and useful rehearsal for the drama of life that they are to play in the world of realities.

The imagination of children can be best utilized, perhaps, in the invention of stories and plays. Children like to "make up" stories. They soon learn to exemplify their ideas of life by fictitious narratives. The teacher might indeed invent little stories to impress the meaning of virtue or truth upon their tender minds. But it is far better to lead the children to "make up" their own stories. Thus they exercise their own little minds.

It is generally enough if the teacher suggests that they make up some stories. The subjects can be indirectly suggested to them so that they will tell a story that has some bearing on religion.

For instance, in their lesson they have said that we should visit sick people, and try to make them happy; they have spoken about helping poor people; they have told about the flowers and the birds. The teacher might suggest: "Children, perhaps you would like to make up some stories on those things that you told me to-day. Tell me again some of the things you were talking about. Oh, yes; sick people. Perhaps some one could make a nice story to show how to be good to sick people." Then, too, the subject of helping the poor could be suggested.

The children will soon learn to invent little fables. It can be suggested to them to make the

flowers, the trees, the birds, the horse, the dog talk. When they get the idea they will invent their stories with glee. When they are at work upon a story, suggestions can be made to them tactfully: "Does the poor horse want to know where the corn and hay come from?" "I wonder what the little flower would say if it knew that God made it."

But children are more expert still at play. They have practiced play from early childhood. In their play little ones enact the lives and actions of their elders. They "play house," "mother," "store," and the like. These "plays" alone would serve them well. It is necessary only to add the new ideas of life that they have learned. When they play "house" now they can be led to introduce there the ideas of good manners, love, kindness, and consideration for one another.

A short time ago the idea of plays was suggested to a class of little ones just turned six. In a few minutes they were playing the "sick woman." On that occasion they got the rudimentary ideas of the play. But the following day they developed the plot. The whole class took part in it. The poor, sick woman (evidently a widow; for no husband was assigned) was given a family of eight children, all of whom were supposed to be hungry and poorly clad. Then there was a priest, a

doctor, a trained nurse, a groceryman, and the rest were kind neighbors. The neighbors came to visit the sick woman; they sympathized with the sufferer and sent for the doctor. They took care of the children and sent to the grocer for provisions. Finally they sent for the priest. It was consoling to see how these little tots applied in their play the ideas of love and kindness they had learned by the "questioning method."

There are other well-known modes of impressing the truth upon the children. Among these the use of the senses holds an important place. It is always useful to visualize knowledge for children. Pictures are good, but realities are better. A flower is more impressive than the picture of a flower, a bird than the picture of a bird. So whenever possible the reality itself should be used to stimulate thought.

The class mentioned above was asked to point out something in the room that made them think of God. One little girl just turning six said: "Those flowers (there were flowers on the desk) make me think of God, 'cause God made the flowers to make the room pretty so that we would be happy." At different times they pointed to things around them and showed their relation to God. Always the idea of God's goodness was

brought forth by the children. A house across the street sufficed for a whole lesson. God put in the ground the stones of which it was built; He made the wood grow on trees; He put the iron and copper for the hinges, nails, door knobs, and the like in the mountains. Thus they accounted for the slate, the tin, the glass (here they needed help on the ingredients). Then they proceeded to account for the furniture, the carpets, the curtains, the clothes. These brought forth the considerations of God's bounty in making wool grow on sheep and flax and cotton grow in the ground.

One day it was raining. When asked what they wanted to talk about, several said, the rain. Here it developed that God made it rain to make the flowers, the grass, the plants, the trees grow. The discussion led to a consideration of fruits and crops and so naturally to God's divine providence for His children. A few weeks later it was snowing. This time another class was "holding a conversation on God." The snow was round about on the street, on the roofs, and on the window sills. It quite naturally became the topic for discussion. The first fact brought out was that the snow was like a blanket which God spread over the earth to keep the grass (wheat, etc.) warm. Then

it melted to make the earth rich so that things would grow in the spring. Its special utility, however, was for sledding. At this juncture a little lad of eight asked: "Why did God make the snow and ice slippery?" With a little vague suggestion the children soon discovered God's purpose in making the snow and ice "slippery." It was necessary only to turn their thoughts to the countries of the north — Alaska, Siberia, and others. Then they saw that people could not live in those snow-bound countries had not God made the snow and ice "slippery." Thus "out of the mouth of infants and of sucklings Thou hast perfected praise" (Psalms 8, 3).

One more example may be permitted for the use of realities. In the second grade a boy of seven produced a pencil as an object that made him think how good God is to us. He said that God put the lead in the ground so that we could dig it out and make pencils. But much more was deduced from the pencil. God had made the wood grow on trees, the rubber was also taken from trees where God had made it grow. The tin rubber holder was made of iron that God put in the mountains. The paint was made from things (minerals and vegetables) that God had prepared. Then it was suggested to them that there was something

else that they had not mentioned. This they finally found; it was writing. When challenged to show how that made them think of God, a little fellow declared: "God gave us a soul so that we could write." He explained, on being questioned, that you had to think to write and that you couldn't think if you didn't have a soul.

Thus real things serve the purpose of giving praise to God. But pictures also have their educational value, especially for young children. Pictures are properly illustrative. They both serve to impress truth upon the child mind and to help hold his interest. But pictures should always be, in some sense, worthy of the reality which they represent; they should not detract from the things they depict. For instance, children often conceive a false idea of God the Father from the picture of a severe, old man with a long beard. Many go through life with the idea that angels really have wings. And it is not rare to find children who carry in their minds the image of three strange-looking gods taken from a fantastic picture of the Blessed Trinity.

There are some things that cannot be adequately depicted either in color or sculpture. It were far better that pictures and statues of God the Father and God the Holy Ghost (except

perhaps in the form of a dove) and of the Blessed Trinity were omitted from the list of materials for religious teaching. Pictures of the angels with wings are less objectionable. Here, after all, we are not dealing with the infinite majesty of God. And it can at least do no harm if children are convinced that angels have wings. Pictures excite interest; but it is always necessary to guard against the false impressions which they may produce. In the use of pictures the æsthetic taste should be cultivated in the children. They should gradually learn to love and appreciate Christian art.

In the same manner children should love to learn good literature. In their early years they should make natural acquaintance with books and writings. At the same time they should learn to read for the content rather than as a task. Thus in teaching religion we must lead the little ones to see the good, the true, and the beautiful in art and literature and in the lives of men. They must learn to associate all that is good and beautiful in life and nature with our heavenly Father.

CHAPTER VI

Story-Telling and Literature

The force of example is proverbial; it is for this reason that we coördinate religious teaching with history. The good and noble deeds of men are not only meritorious in themselves, but they stimulate good and noble aspirations in others. History depicts much that is ennobling in the lives of men. There are set down deeds of valor, heroism, virtue, and self-sacrifice. The lives of the saints and martyrs especially manifest the nobility and the sanctity of life to which mortals may aspire.

Biography, then, may serve an important purpose in the teaching of religion. It is from the lives of men that, for the most part, stories and narratives should be drawn to illustrate religious teaching and impress it upon the hearts of the little ones. However, the rule of apperception must be observed both in the selection and in the telling of stories. For little children stories should be selected that appeal especially to the imagination. Hence it would seem that stories and fables

7668

taken from nature would be best suited to their tender minds. They love to imagine things. The flowers and the birds and the little stars can be made talk for them. Listen to the little miss talking to her doll. Hear the toot of the little spool train drawn by a little lad.

The little tots are not deceived and made feel that the plants and animals and inanimate things can really talk. Ask a little one what he thinks the flower, the bird, or the bee would say if it could talk and you will ordinarily be delighted with the answer you receive. Says one little tot: "The flower would thank God for making it so pretty." Another: "The little bird would thank God for teaching it to sing and for giving it such a pretty coat to wear." Still another perhaps: "The tiny bee would tell God it is happy because He gave it so many fine flowers to feed on."

Stories for little children should be short, centered about one idea. They should not present problems to them that are beyond their capacity to solve. For example, death should not occur in stories until the children to whom they are told have the true meaning of death. The story of the Holy Innocents and the stories of the martyrs are of this kind. After the children learn that death is a "going home" to our heavenly Father these

stories will make a good impression upon them. But before they have taken this attitude toward death such stories may confuse them; they may not be able to harmonize them with God's mercy and love.

Children like pathos and tenderness; they are thrilled at the recital of noble exploits. They are interested in the deeds of men; they are moved to emulation especially by narratives that tell the courage and achievement of other children. Stories are often wish-fulfillments for children. When ideal characters are presented to them, their phantasy is aroused. They assume in their own imagination the part of the hero or heroine or of some other pleasing character. Ordinarily perhaps in stories that interest them they take the part of the characters that are to their liking. This tendency in children to assume characters is of utility to the teacher. It indicates to her the sort of stories that are best suited to the children. With this in mind the stories can be so selected as to promote the formation of ideals in the minds of the children.

The formation of ideals in children is of vital importance for their future. For just as all things created first existed as an idea in the mind of God, so the future man must, in some sense, exist in the

mind of the child from whom he is to develop. It is then a function of the story to develop ideals. The story is a means of development rather than of instruction. Hence it must ever bear relation to the knowledge and experience of the children. In other words, the story-teller must observe the law of apperception.

The child may listen attentively to a story, be amused at it, be moved to wonderment. But if it be beyond the sphere of his interests it will not produce results. Wherefore the story-content must be as far as possible proportioned to the development of the child. This is especially true in the teaching of religion. In religion the story should strike a kindred sentiment or fact in the mind and heart of the child. It should produce its own harmonious response in his soul. Never should it be necessary to moralize on a story. If the story will not produce its own spontaneous impression on the child it were better left untold. If you tell a child a story about a noble deed it should create in him a desire to do something noble. If the teacher felt constrained to say: "Now, you should try to do noble deeds like that," it would be a confession that the story was a failure. It would be like explaining the point in a joke after it has been told. However, it is well to lead the

children to reflect upon the content of the story. They can be asked to tell what they think about the different personages and their actions. This will be thought-productive for them; it will often aid them to see more clearly the moral of the story.

The story should have a logical bearing upon the lesson of the moment. Recitations properly conducted take on the character of conversations between teacher and pupils, the pupils seemingly playing the more important rôle. Now in ordinary conversations our narratives must have a direct bearing upon the subject under discussion, else they will be out of place. It is the same with the teaching story. It must refer logically and naturally to the topic that is under discussion. Thus, for instance, if we are talking about the Commandments, the story of Moses is quite apropos. If we are considering the subject of sin, the story of the fallen angels will fit the occasion. But the story of the Last Supper, for instance, would be out of place in a treatment of Baptism.

Stories must be well scrutinized before they are told to children. One false note may be sufficient, even in a good story, to produce an evil result. It is as if a little poison were hidden in a fine, large loaf of bread. Often, too, there is danger lest the

villain elicit more sympathy than the hero. Sometimes the fault lies in the telling of the story. To tell a story well it is necessary to know the child mind. The child loves action and the realistic. Thus the story of Moses on Mount Sinai might be told in two different strains.

God gave the Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai amid thunder and lightning. They were written on two stone tablets. Moses had spent forty days praying in the mountains when he received the Commandments from God. Such a narrative would make little impression upon children; it is too cold and formal. But the same facts can be presented in a lively style filled with action. Moses went up a mountain called Sinai; there he stayed all alone for forty days. He was praying there in that wild place to God. One day there was a great storm of thunder and lightning. Then God appeared to Moses and gave him two stone tablets. On them the Ten Commandments were carved. In the first case the story begins outside the ordinary interests of children. But in the second case it begins with mountains, thunder, lightning. The actions are emphasized to make the story interesting to them.

The meaning of the story told for illustration must be obvious to the children. It must deal

with concrete facts from which other concrete facts are to be deduced. Children are little concerned with abstract ideas. For this reason great care must be taken in the use of metaphors and similes. The traditional three-leafed clover is not an apt figure to represent the Blessed Trinity. Later, when the child begins to reflect, he may decide that each divine person is but a part of God as the leaves are part of the clover. In the same manner the triangle may lead him to conceive the Blessed Trinity as a figure composed of three lines.

The parables of Christ are the ideal teaching stories. Always our divine Lord begins with something that is familiar to His hearers. The force of these similes is best shown perhaps in the parable of the cockle and the good seed:

"The Kingdom of Heaven," says our Blessed Lord, "is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field.

"But while men were asleep, his enemy came and oversowed cockle among the wheat and went his way.

"And when the blade was sprung up and had brought forth fruit, then appeared also the cockle.

"And the servants of the goodman of the house coming, said to him: Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? Whence, then, hath it cockle?

"And he said to them: An enemy hath done this. And the servants said to him: Wilt thou that we go and gather it up?

"And he said: No, lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it.

"Suffer both to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it in bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn . . ."

He then explains its meaning: "He that soweth good seed is the Son of Man.

"And the field is the world. And the good seed are the children of the kingdom. And the cockle are the children of the wicked one.

"And the enemy that sowed them is the devil. But the harvest is the end of the world. And the reapers are the angels," etc. (St. Matt. 13, 24–32.)

Always Christ makes use of those things that are familiar to His hearers. The old law of casting debtors into prison prevailed. Hence He uses the parable of the ungrateful debtor to inculcate forgiveness. The lost groat, the barren fig tree, the ungrateful husbandmen, the laborers in the vineyard, the leaven, the mustard seed, the marriage feast, the fishing net, the priceless pearl, the pharisee and the publican, the prodigal son,

all were taken from the life of the people. Christ entered into their concerns and led them thence to the consideration of the divine truth which He had brought from heaven.

The Bible is rich in stories and example. These can be used to great advantage in teaching religion. The life of Christ furnishes the most sublime examples for the Christian life. Christ taught the world both by His word and by His sacred life. The children should become familiar with every detail of our divine Saviour's life and that of our Blessed Mother. These holy narratives should be interspersed throughout the teaching and be introduced whenever the occasion permits. In dealing with the life of Christ we can describe the holy places in which He lived, suffered, and died. This will add interest and will furnish useful information and stimulate love for the holy places. The same may be said of the early martyrs. In relating their heroic deeds, the catacombs, the churches, and monuments of Rome can be made familiar to the children.

There is also much of utility to religious teaching in literature. The great masterpieces of prose and poetry might well be associated with the idea of religion in the minds of the children. The children should early learn to know the foremost

Catholic works of literature. They should learn in their youth to appreciate the thought and the learning of the great Catholic masters. To this end quotations and passages taken from the Catholic authors will soon give the children a taste for their works. Thus they will obtain a twofold result: they will receive the teaching and they will also acquire a taste for good reading.

CHAPTER VII

Behavior and Religion

The child must grow in religion with the natural development of his own powers. His intellectual development in religion should be procured by the exercise of his own intellect. But religion enters into all the phases of life and thus it takes on a practical character. Divine truth that has been properly assimilated should manifest itself in human conduct. Thus the truths of faith become the guiding principles in men's lives. Hence the test of religious training is the conduct of the children.

Just as the intellect must be developed by the exercise of its own powers, so also must the will be developed in the same manner. The will is a blind faculty which is guided by the light of the intellect. The intellect must furnish motives for the will. Now there may be many, even conflicting, motives at work in the presence of a given action. Always the stronger motives will overcome the weaker. Hence it is the province of religious teaching to implant motives for virtue

that are stronger than the motives for indifference and vice.

Love is an act of the will; a man may be known by his affections. Love rules the world, because it is the expression of man's craving for happiness. We love the things that can make us happy; we become their slaves; we are ever ready to make sacrifices for them. Even for unholy love men sometimes give up all that is dear to them in this world. For the love of material things, men will endure dangers and hardships. But the highest and holiest love of which man is capable is the love of God. Akin to this is Christian love for our neighbor which is based upon the love of God.

To be effective our teaching must lead the little ones to love God above all things. This love must be so real and so strong that it will enable them to resist allurements that might turn them from the love of God. It should impel them to serve God even at the cost of great sacrifices. Love should prompt us to sacrifice pleasure for duty, ease and comfort for labor and weariness. It should impel us to overcome the lower appetites and seek spiritual things. It should enable us to resist the influence of environment and to do the will of God. But love permeates the whole man;

it is not the result of a cold, intellectual calculation. It enters largely into the domain of the emotions; thus the will is influenced by feeling in choosing the object of its affection.

Religious teaching, then, must ennoble the intellect, the will, and the emotions if it is to succeed in making supernatural men. The true Christian must live and act from supernatural motives. "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do," says St. Paul, "do all to the glory of God " (1 Cor. 10, 31).

But a mere knowledge of divine truth will not necessarily produce supernatural motives in men's lives. The truth must also enter into the sphere of feeling. Religion must give joys, hopes, and consolations that will supersede the satisfactions of the mere natural man. Thus only can strong motives for good be engendered in men's hearts.

Early in the life of children the choice must be made between good and evil, between baser pleasures and spiritual joy, between the love of material things and the love of God. At first this choice presents itself in the form of simple little problems of conduct. These are child problems. It may be the little duty of saying grace before satisfying a hungry stomach. It may be the division of an apple with a little brother or

sister. It may be one of a thousand other little moral problems that arise in child life from day to day. It is the solution of these problems that will enable the man of later years to solve the questions of adult conduct. These problems are the material upon which the will of the child must be exercised.

It will profit the child little to have a big, strong adult standing by to solve his will problems for him and to thrust adult solutions upon him. This procedure will not develop the will of the child. It were like trying to teach a child to walk by carrying him about in your arms. We cannot train the will of the child by thrusting our will upon him. Our discipline must be the rule of love for the child; it should not be the rule of fear and compulsion. Discipline should emanate from the child, else it has no meaning in his life. It should mean the establishment of order in the conduct of the individual child.

The old idea of group discipline has failed lamentably. It was similar to military training that fits men for group action and tends to unfit them for the individual activities of normal life. We are training our children for life in which they shall have to struggle and labor as individuals. Each shall have to travel its own path of duty;

each shall be responsible for its own destiny. Of course those doomed to spend their lives in penitentiaries will be forced to follow a routine discipline. But the generality of men will live as responsible human beings guided by their own individual reason and will. Our training is intended to fit children for life. Childhood is the novitiate of adulthood. If the man is to be able to regulate his own conduct he must learn to do so in childhood. But this he cannot learn except by the exercise of his own personal freedom.

Astonishment and dismay are often expressed at the large number of those who have been given long years of stern disciplinary training that go astray. The product of the orphan asylum is proverbially a failure both in the moral and the material world. He has suffered from misguided zeal that robbed him of his freedom and almost his personality. Thus de-personed he is turned out into the world to battle for life and salvation. He has never known responsibility for his own actions. He followed stupidly in line to his meals, with a zealous soul to watch and drive him. In the same processional way he was driven even to his prayers with his God, and thus he marched from morning until night.

There are many schools, alas! in which this

tyrannical routine still prevails. It is a means of establishing external order, or rather the semblance of order. But it evades the proper issue of training the children to live their own lives. This form of discipline ignores the dignity of the children by failing to recognize their reason and their will and their own individual conscience. They are trained as the hunter trains his dog to follow his command. But this blind following of commands through fear is by no means the noble virtue of obedience. "The will is the subject of obedience," says St. Thomas (Summa 2–2, 2, 5, 3). He who has learned to obey will follow the will of his lawful superior in his absence as well as in his presence. He will have acquired the motives that will prompt him to obey.

But what are we to do? If we allow the children to act as they please, pandemonium will ensue. This is the problem that confronts those who have repressed and smothered the individuality of the children. Often they find that the longer the children are in school the more difficult they are to manage. This in itself should be sufficient proof that their methods of discipline are false.

Religion should convey three kinds of motives: motives that will prompt the children to observe

the proper order in their own lives; motives for maintaining their proper relations toward others; and motives for observing their proper relations to God. We learn by our mistakes, says an adage. Thus, too, by their mistakes the children must learn to regulate their own conduct. If they are led to reflect upon their little misdemeanors they will learn to avoid them and thus to shun greater sins in later life.

Faith teaches us the dignity of our own person; we are children of God, endowed with an immortal soul, and destined for an eternal life with God. Even our body will finally partake of supernatural life. All this should fill us with self-respect and lead us to feel the responsibility of our own life. This self-respect and this feeling of personal responsibility should grow apace in the children with their progress in religion. The teacher promotes the saving quality of self-respect in the children by respecting their dignity as rational creatures. She engenders the sense of personal responsibility in them by guiding them in the work of self-mastery.

Faith teaches us that God is our common Father and hence we belong to a common brotherhood. We must learn to love one another as brothers. This Christian love must fit men to live as peaceful

and useful members of human society. The school should prepare the children for a life of Christian love. If they practice the law of Christian love in their tender years we may well hope that they will continue to do so when they have grown to manhood. But they must ever act from their own motives.

The school is a little society that affords opportunities for the practice of both the human and the divine virtues. Children who have learned to have consideration for others will be orderly in their groups. This order religious teaching should impart to them. It should also give them kindness, gentleness, unselfishness, generosity, respect, and gentility. The practice of these human virtues will certainly produce order in the classroom. Add to them the divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity and the four cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance and you have the qualities that make the true Christian character. Religion must supply all the virtues that form Christian character. But virtues are habits of the will; they cannot be engendered by routine; they can be cultivated by free acts of the will alone.

Faith teaches us our true relation to God. He is our Father; we are His children. We are

destined to dwell with Him in love for eternity. Here on earth we serve Him and do His will to prove our love for Him. God's love is the motive that should impel us to live true Christian lives. God's love should move us to observe the proper order in our own lives, love our neighbor, and serve God. But if God's love is to guide us in adulthood, it must rule us in childhood. Thus religion must furnish the motives for virtue in the lives of children as it does in the lives of men. Hence they must be left free to practice the virtues; they must learn to bear the responsibilities of their own lives.

God gave men free will to guide them in their lives. The teacher, then, must respect the natural freedom of the children so that they may learn to live by its guidance. If the children are to be guided in their conduct by their own will, the teacher must assume a different rôle from that of the strict master. She must become the friend and adviser of the children. But to do this she must win their love and confidence. "Obedience," says St. Thomas, "proceeds from reverence for superiors. In respect to those who are placed over us this reverence takes the form of esteem; it is filial love toward parents; and then toward God it is devotion which is the principal act of

religion" (Summa 2–2; 104, 3, 4). When the children have proper reverence for the teacher, they seek her advice, they are eager to do her will. This is obedience.

Parents and teacher should represent God's love and meekness to the children. They should lead the children to consider the consequences of their actions. They should present virtue to them so that it will be acceptable to them in all circumstances. Unbecoming actions in children are due almost entirely to their inconsideration. They must learn to reflect upon the consequences before they act. When children have done something wrong they should be given an opportunity to reflect upon their action and to repair, as far as possible, the injury done. Thus, godlike, we draw good from evil.

Oh, the crimes that have been committed against the little ones in the name of discipline! At a time when they are just beginning their little moral problems of life they have blundered. Perhaps it was but the exuberant thoughtlessness of childhood. But they have been publicly disgraced for their blunder. They have been subjected to shame before their fellows and robbed of their self-respect, thrust violently into the class of the wicked. Ah, yes, punishment should have

its place in our training; but it should hold there the same position as the jail and the penitentiary hold in the larger society.

When a child blunders in an arithmetical problem the good teacher makes some suggestions and encourages him to try it again. Thus the child masters the art of arithmetic. But here he has falsely solved a problem in that all-important sphere of life; he has committed a moral blunder! Is he to be denied the consideration he receives in the field of mathematics? If so, how will he learn to master the art of moral conduct? No; the child must needs have the sympathy, help, and encouragement of his teacher to enable him to apply religion to his actions. He must learn prudence in his actions.

The teacher will, whenever possible, talk to the child in private to help him correct his fault. If the child will, then, in presence of love and sympathy, by his own promptings solve the problem correctly and suggest the proper remedy, all is well. A word of confidence and encouragement from the teacher will suffice. But perhaps the erring child needs some suggestion to enable him to reflect on his fault. Then there are just three questions to be presented to him: (1) What do you think about it? (2) How do you feel about

it? (3) What are you going to do about it? Ordinarily the child will find the right response to these questions. He will then feel encouraged to think that he is worthy of such consideration; he will preserve his self-respect.

CHAPTER VIII

Character Building

Character is undoubtedly formed in early childhood. A foundation, a framework, at least is then made upon which the future edifice is to rest. Religious teaching must furnish men the principles and standards and convictions of life which form a Christian character. It must enable them to live and act according to the dictates of right reason enlightened by faith.

Not all things are allowed to man upon earth. Reason tells him that he must regulate his desires. It is as if he possessed a double personality; one is the man of duty; the other is the man of pleasure. "For I know," says St. Paul, "that there dwelleth not in me, that is to say, in my flesh, that which is good; for to will, is present with me; but to accomplish that which is good, I find not. For the good which I will, I do not; but the evil which I will not, that I do. . . . Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 7, 18–25).

Reason elevates man; the senses drag him down. This is the conflict that rages in all humanity. History is replete with sad evidence of this conflict. Great and good men have fallen in the struggle. But we are provided with the weapons; the rational man can prevail over the animal man; the man of duty can triumph over the man of pleasure.

The good Christian is necessarily an honorable man. To be a good Christian he must possess all the noble qualities of true manhood. He must be a man of character, guided by firm principles of conduct. He must have the courage to follow his standards of life in every contingency. He must be uncompromising to false opinions and fearless in face of criticism. He must be a man of duty and follow the path of righteousness at every cost. He must look upon life as a time of struggle and spiritual conquest; he must bear in mind his eternal destiny. His great concern upon earth must be to do the will of God.

Such indeed is the true Christian. He is a man with an ideal that will fit him for eternity; he is an optimist who knows the true meaning of life. His soul is filled with hope and peace to all men. He is generous, just, sincere, and true; he is meek, strong, patient, and forbearing. This is the

character which our teaching must build up in God's little ones. They must learn the proper aims and purposes of life; they must learn to live true Christian lives.

The children must, from the beginning, learn to work with a purpose. They must learn to think and to exercise their own personal liberty according to the true principles of life. The child must conceive his own purposes; he must learn to do things not as tasks, but for the good that will result therefrom; he must act from motives for doing something good and useful.

There is in children, as in men, a desire for mastery. This is perhaps the manifestation of man's natural tendency to seek his own perfection. This desire for mastery, for conquest, for achievement must perforce find satisfaction. If a child fail to find legitimate satisfaction for this desire he will generally seek other satisfaction. Thus if he fails in his educational tasks he may satisfy his craving for mastery by creating disturbance. If he does not succeed in making intellectual and moral conquests he is all too apt to seek them in baser things. Herein is manifested a striking moral phenomenon that is often manifested in life. Often when men are confronted with failure, they go on a debauch. Thus they seek to make con-

quests in baser levels when they have failed in higher things.

When a child solves a problem for himself his desire for mastery is, to that extent, satisfied. Thus this natural ambition is a force that must be directed for good. Every conquest of the child increases his courage and prepares him for other conquests. The child is indeed struggling for superiority; but this is not necessarily a manifestation of pride. If properly regulated it is zeal for good, but if it be neglected it may readily become pride.

Pride implies an undue struggle for excellence; it is defined as undue esteem for our own excellence. There is in man a natural desire to rise to higher things. It was upon this that the serpent based his argument: "You shall be as gods" (Genesis, 3, 5). "It is still the temptation of every creature," says Dupanloup, "to exalt himself, to be intoxicated with his own excellence, to rise, to rise always in his mind, in his heart, in his life; this is the dream of pride in every soul" (L'Enfant, p. 216). But St. Thomas says: "Humility by which we debase ourselves is not opposed to magnanimity which impels the mind to great things; for both belong to right reason. Magnanimity is a virtue because it is a tendency

to the highest things through the exercise of right reason" (Summa 2–2, 129, 3, 4).

This quality in the child is a great asset for the teacher; but it must be utilized, else it will turn to evil. To repress this craving for excellence is to injure the child, impede his development, and perhaps impel him to seek lower forms of gratification. Repressions are generally injurious to the child. But this does not mean that we are to leave the children to their own devices. We must elevate, direct, and cultivate their power and tendencies. We must furnish them the proper materials for the exercise of their faculties and we must enable them to achieve the proper conquests for their cravings. This inner craving for power and superiority produces a sense of inferiority when it fails in its struggle. This sense of inferiority sometimes causes the child to become a dullard or a lazy fellow.

In the formation of his character the child must regulate his appetites and his emotions; he must subjugate them to his higher faculties. Eleven appetites are enumerated in man. They are love, hate, desire, repugnance, joy, sadness, hope, despair, courage, boldness, and fear. But of all these love is the strongest. It is a passive force that is attracted by the object of its affection. It

is for this reason that love must be the basis of Christian character, and God must be the object of that love.

The fruits of love are seven: union with the beloved, clinging together, exaltation, zeal in seeking the good of the beloved, joy in the presence of the beloved, sadness in his absence, and labor and activity for the sake of the beloved. Our teaching must purify the love of the children, make them seek only that which is good and noble. They must learn so to love God that all their desires will tend to Him. Their joy and their hope will be to be united with Him. But to possess this strong love they must hate all that can separate them from God. They must be bold and courageous in the presence of dangers that would rob them of their beloved. They must flee from the temptations that might corrupt their love. This kind of love cannot be communicated by words; it must grow with life; it must be deeply planted in the hearts of the little ones and fostered with care.

The children must be trained in courage. They must know how to avoid human respect and cowardice; they must learn to bear scorn and ridicule without faltering; they must learn to undergo hardships and trials without complain-

ing; they must learn self-abnegation and sacrifice. To inculcate these qualities in the young is an essential part of religious training. In childhood there are opportunities for the exercise of these qualities. These must be utilized.

These problems of life must, in the course of our teaching, be brought to the consideration of the children. This will enable them to meet them with determination and conviction. The unthinking sometimes scoff at virtue, and ridicule religious practices. The children should learn to take the proper attitude toward these scoffers. They should be led to reflect upon the course they will follow when these situations present themselves. They must understand the nobility of the courage necessary to withstand ridicule for the sake of duty. The children must also learn to suffer persecution for justice, honor, and righteousness. They must learn to forego ease and pleasure for the service of God and their neighbor. For this they must reflect upon the right attitude to assume when such situations arise. They must be immune from the seductions of evil companions; they must learn how to resist the "crowd." This often requires great strength of character. They must have firm principles that will enable them to preserve their

honor and their purity even when all the world laughs at them.

But these qualities of soul can be engendered only by deep religious convictions and fervent love for God. These convictions must rest upon Christian ideals. In a sense every one creates his future self by an ideal which he forms in his mind. We are what we wish to be. The children must be led to form ideals of their future selves. But to form true ideals requires wisdom and prudence. Wisdom directs us in the selection of our last end; prudence guides us in the choice of the means to attain it.

Successful men have an aim in life and strive with all their might to attain it. If a man selects a good aim, he is wise; if he uses the proper means to attain it, he is prudent. If he would fulfill his purpose he must make all things else subservient to his aim in life. It is thus in the Christian life; all concerns of life must be made contribute to the attainment of eternal life. Wisdom should show man that God is his last end, and all things of earth are but means to attain God.

Thus in the formation of character the children must learn to know the due proportion of things. They must know how to compare the temporal with the eternal. They must know

the relative values of material and spiritual things. They must know the superiority of the supernatural to the natural. The children must learn to reflect, from the beginning, upon the true purposes of life. They must learn to conceive life as a whole in its relation to themselves, to their neighbor, and to God. To do all this the judgment of the children must be trained. They must become men of thought and conviction. Our teaching should aim at this particularly, to train the children in the faculty of thought and reflection. The mind must learn to weigh particular good in its relation to universal good.

Christian life is composed of many moral decisions. Our work is to prepare the children to make the proper decisions. To do this we lead them to make these decisions over and over again in their minds and hearts and in practice. We present the choice to them by our teaching; for we know that upon their power to decide rests their future destiny.

CHAPTER IX

The Rule of Positives

We are all more or less influenced by suggestion. Hints, intimations, indirect associations, and the like generally produce a ready response in us. Even the facial expression and the deportment of others suggest much meaning to us. If a man intimates, even vaguely, that he recognizes good qualities in us, we are pleased. Thus, for instance, one man tells another that he should have been appointed to a certain high and responsible position. The intimation is immediately accepted by the second; he feels complimented by the implied appreciation of his ability. In the same manner negative suggestion produces the opposite result. Thus a man would be insulted if some one asked him whether he had stolen a missing article. The questioner may then explain as he will that he did not mean to insult him; the fact remains that he intimated the possibility of his being a thief.

Indirect suggestion produces a deep impression upon men's minds. Merely to name a man in

a category with great and good men is often the highest praise that can be bestowed upon him. And even the most humble and sincere are influenced by the imputation of good. On the other hand the suggestion of evil unconsciously produces its negative effect upon the mind. The opinions of others irresistibly influence our thought and our actions. It is easier for us to retain self-respect when others think well of us. We are likewise impelled to imitate the good qualities that others ascribe to us. Naturally these suggestions are more effectual in proportion as they seem to be sincere and plausible. The importance of suggestion has long been recognized in educational work. Children, more than adults, readily respond to suggestion. It is upon this phenomenon that we base our "Rule of Positives."

We are all to some degree creatures of environment; we naturally acquire certain characteristics of the group in which we live. This undisputed fact indicates that the actions and converse of our associates deposit something in our individuality. It would seem that whatever passes into the human mind leaves a trace behind. An impression, perhaps an indelible impression, has been left there. These impressions, whatever they are, play an important part in the formation

of character. They are, to a great extent, the materials from which the personality of the child is built. Impressions vary in intensity according to the personal influence of him who produces them. It is for this reason that children manifest in their lives, to a striking degree, the characteristics of their parents. But, after parents, teachers have perhaps the greatest personal influence upon children. Hence it is of prime importance for teachers to learn to make the proper impression upon the minds of the children in all their teaching.

It may be permissible to categorize impressions in two classes, the one negative, the other positive. To negative impressions belong all kinds of repressions and inhibitions. This is the storehouse of all the things which children are "not to do," "not to think," "not to say"; it is the infinite realm of "negatives." To the positive suggestions belong all forms of encouragement and coöperation. Here in some mysterious manner is stored the sum total of all that is constructive in character.

The problems of life resolve themselves into this simple question: *What am I to do?* Our teaching should help the children answer this question whenever it presents itself. Now, compared with the definite thing which *we should do*,

in a given case, there are innumerable things which *we should not do.* If I am to go to church on Sunday there are myriads of places to which I cannot go at the same time. If you want me to be silent why ask me to stop talking; for there are many other ways in which I may break silence. Thus the distinction between positive and negative teaching becomes apparent. If you want order in the classroom, tell the children your wish. If you say: "Stop your noise," you fail to suggest the idea of order. If you wish the children to be truthful talk to them about truthfulness; falsehood is another matter.

You cannot teach virtue, purity, and love by dealing with vice, impurity, and hatred. Truth, goodness, virtue, love, and all that is good and ennobling are positive. But error, vice, evil, and the like are negative. If the positive truth is properly impressed upon the mind and heart of the child, the negative error will be thereby excluded. If a child learns to solve his moral problems correctly he need not study all the erroneous solutions at which it is possible to arrive.

To enable the child to solve his problems properly, we must assist him to acquire the rules and principles that will enable him to do so. Thus, for example, we would train the child to

honesty. First, he must learn the meaning of honesty; he must learn that it consists in respecting the rights of others. Then there must be engendered in him motives that will impel him to respect the rights of others. Furthermore he must know how to apply the knowledge of duty to his own life so that his motives may operate. In other words, he must know how to apply the law of honesty to every situation that can arise in his life. He must, for instance, know what to do with something that he has found. He must understand the rights of others to things that seem to be useless to them. He must know the rule of honesty in his games, his study, and his home life. These problems he must solve with the aid of our teaching.

It is in this manner that he mastered the rules of addition in arithmetic. He learned to add the great problems by adding correctly the simple problems, not by attempting to learn all the possible errors that he could commit. It is true that the children must be warned against vice. In the present example, they must be taught to avoid stealing, cheating, extortion, and all injustice. But even here we may observe the "rule of positives."

In every proposition there is a verb-content

which distinguishes it. For example: "John Brown did not go to the theater to-day." Here *go to theater* is the verb-content of the sentence. This is the essence of the expression; the other ideas, such as *John Brown, not, to-day,* are simply grouped about this main idea. It is the main idea or *verb-content* that ordinarily makes the deepest impression upon the mind of the hearer. This fact will often manifest itself. For instance, your friend, in conversation, tells you that a certain person (in whom you are not particularly interested) was drowned at the bathing beach. A few days later you hear mention of a drowning at that particular beach, you remember the *was drowned* but you cannot recall the person's name.

Again, you hear that a person was not present on a certain occasion. You remember the expression, but you are not sure whether or *not* the person was present. This last example leads to the consideration of propositions and their contradictories. Thus, *You must not tell lies* and *you must tell lies* are two forms of the same proposition; one is negative; the other is positive. They are distinguished solely by the negative particle. The impression made upon the mind by these two expressions is apt to be practically the same.

The main idea of the sentence is *lying*. In the negative proposition the insinuation of the expression is *to lie* with an inhibition added thereto. In the mental store of the child it will be classified with falsehood. The "not" will be classified with repressions and inhibitions.

Examples of this psychological phenomenon are frequent in everyday life. The mother goes out and leaves her children alone. She says as a parting word: "Now, don't go into the pantry," "don't play with the water" "don't hang out the window." Later she says to her husband: "I don't know what to do with those children; they always do the very thing I tell them not to do." Poor, deluded mother! She does not realize that she suggested to the children the "mischief" that they did. Had she told her children to behave nicely while she was gone, to remain like good children in the proper place, her complaint would perhaps have been unnecessary.

This should cause serious reflection especially in the matter of teaching purity to the children. Whatever else be said, it is purity that we must inculcate. No amount of disquisition upon impurity will effect this. On the contrary, it may easily contribute to the moral ruin of the children. It is true we must teach the children the heinous-

ness of sin. To do this we must mention certain sins to which they will be exposed. But these we treat in a positive manner. The impression made by these two propositions may be quite different: *Do not curse* and *keep from cursing* (or *avoid cursing*). In one the verb-content is "curse"; in the other it is the whole sentence: *keep from cursing*. It is of importance to observe this rule when presenting these evils to the mind of children.

The individuality or personality or character of the child is a real entity. It is composed of all the ideas, sentiments, and expressions that have come to the child. It is molded largely by environmental influences. Children are prone to assume the characteristics that are attributed to them. This they do, not by reflection, but intuitively. Thus you will often find that the young rowdy is simply responding to the ideas which his parents and teachers have formed of him. Likewise will the attribution of good to the child have a salutary effect upon him.

We know that in strict justice we are bound to assume that others are prompted in their actions by good motives — until the contrary has been clearly proved. Needless to say the teacher should accord this justice to the children. But the

principle should extend further than the particular actions of the children. In dealing generally with good and evil, the good should always be ascribed, by direct address, to the children, while the evil should be mentioned in the impersonal.

Thus we would say to the children: Why do *you* love God? Why do *you* keep the Commandments? Why do *you* do good to others? Why do *you* obey your parents? But if there is question of evil and vice, we would ask: "Why do some people curse and swear? Why do they break the Commandments? Why do some children disobey their parents?" In this manner we show due consideration for the children; we would not, by the remotest suggestion, impute even the possibility of evil to them.

To tell children they must not steal, curse and swear, lie, cheat, deceive, is to insult them. It is to impute these evils to them. Adults would resent the implication if they were told not to do these things. For, to tell a person not to do a thing implies that he might otherwise do it. If I left some one alone in my room, and said on departing: "Do not steal anything while I am gone," he would be indignant, and rightly so.

Children have even tenderer sensibilities than adults. Hence delicacy must be observed in

mentioning evil to them. Among cultured people, it is considered impolite to use the direct form of address in exemplifying hypothetical evil. To say in good company: "Now, Mr. X, if you were caught stealing, what would you do?" would be considered highly improper. The same consideration is due children, but for a greater reason. We must guard them from the slightest suggestion of evil; we must not imply its possibility in their lives.

We must assume that the child wishes to be good. If he commits a fault we must give him the benefit of the doubt; we must make it as easy as possible for him to repair the evil; we must do all within our power to preserve his self-respect. To do this we must make the child feel that he is still in the class of good children. We must instill hope and courage into him by our love and sympathy. We must help him form the proper judgment on the matter so that he can avoid the fault in the future.

But suggestion is transmitted not only by words but also by looks and actions. Facial expression is a strong conveyor of impressions. The children readily distinguish the "accusing face" from the approving and sympathetic face. The children can easily see by the actions of the teacher

whether or not they are trusted. Not only our teaching but our attitude should also be positive.

But it may be objected that seven of the ten Commandments are given in the negative form. It is true, but the Commandments were given, in their present form, for the vindictive law of fear. However, Christ changed their form, and suited them to the law of love. According to His teaching, the two Commandments of love embrace the whole law and the prophets.

The human mind craves positive teaching. Truth is the proper object of our intellect; and truth is positive. It is the positive knowledge of the mind that goes to make up the intellectual life of men. Just so must we conceive the religious life of man; divine truth must operate in the man and enable him to lead a true Christian life. To this end his mind and heart must be filled with the true, the good, and the beautiful. All these belong to the order of positives. His whole life must be constructed upon clearly defined principles. He must be able always to distinguish good and strip it of all that belongs to evil. He must be so familiar with truth that he will never confound it with error.

Thus by following the rule of positives we may hope to build up in the soul of the child

a tower of strength. We may hope to prepare him for the struggles of life. His soul thus becomes a depository of truth and virtue. His character is built upon the firm basis of religion and morality.

CHAPTER X

Class Procedure in Religion

Always greet the children cheerfully on entering the class, or when they come into your presence. It is well even to anticipate their greeting; for a pleasant greeting from the teacher always produces a good impression on the children. To let them understand by word or manner that you expect a greeting from them is implicitly asserting your superiority. It belongs to the old "standing-on-dignity" system which almost inevitably creates a gulf between teacher and child.

The teacher should acquire the habit of wearing a pleasing expression of countenance. In business the smile is said to be often commercialized. Assuredly to the teacher the smiling face has a real educational value. Let the children feel that you are glad to be with them, and *be so.* Indeed for one who has the proper disposition, and the proper attitude toward life, it is natural to be happy with the little ones. True love and sympathy on the part of the teacher will unfailingly produce the "open mind" in the children and prepare their

hearts for her teaching. Human sympathy should engender in the teacher the finest consideration for the children. It is with this disposition she should enter upon the class work.

The class work should always begin with a little prayer to invoke God's blessing both upon child and teacher. But it will also prepare the minds of the children and dispose them for the consideration of religion. There should also be a prayer at the end of the period. This should always take the form of thanksgiving; for then the minds of the children are fresh from the consideration of God's bounty and love.

Needless to say, the conscientious teacher will always prepare the subject matter to be treated. She will not only study the truth that is to be considered, but she will meditate upon it so as better to comprehend its meaning. She will familiarize herself with all the materials that bear upon the subject. Then, in an especial manner, she will reflect upon the point of contact between the truth in question and the lives of the children.

Besides preparing her materials, the teacher will also prepare herself for her class work. She would do well, before entering the classroom, to reflect upon the aims of her teaching and the method she is to follow. Her aim is to develop

the child in religion. This she will do best by producing the greatest possible mental activity on the part of the children. She should bear in mind that in the class work the children are the active principle while she is the passive principle. With this conviction in mind she will give free scope to the child mind, veiling her own activity as much as possible. To accomplish this, she must know how to "draw out" and direct the children without seeming to be too officious.

The class work should take on the nature of a conversation. But the teacher should be careful to keep from monopolizing the conversation. She should show the same consideration for the children in this as she would for the most cultivated adults. The children always respond touchingly to this display of gentility and culture.

In appearance, at least, the teacher can accord the children the satisfaction of selecting the subject for discussion. Then with a little tact, she can lead them imperceptibly to the subject which she has in mind for them. She may say: "Well, children, what are you going to tell me to-day?" or "What are you going to talk about to-day?" Invariably they will suggest the subject discussed the previous day. This will be a proof for the teacher that the work done then interested them

and that it produced results. It will also permit a review of the previous day's work. From the subject of yesterday they will pass logically to the subject of to-day. Sometimes, however, they will suggest a topic of conversation that does not seem to bear directly upon the matter to be discussed.

On a certain occasion it was asked of a class what they chose to talk about. The day before they had talked about God's loving care for us. But during the night there was a heavy fall of snow. Now the housetops, the streets, the window sills were covered with the beautiful snow. So in response to the question, a dozen voices called out almost in unison: "The snow, the snow." And in fact the snow became the subject of conversation. It did not take the children long to show that the snow is a manifestation of God's love for us.

It is the work of the teacher to direct the child to the problem and then help him solve it. Thus if the teacher asks: "Who made the sun?" she is communicating a problem to the children. The children readily solve it by responding: "God made the sun." It is in this manner that we would train the children to solve the "problems" of religion. In the questioning method the ques-

tion is the problem which has been fitted, as it were, to the littleness of the child mind. The child's answer is the solution to the problem.

In the beginning, the children are inclined to answer with as few words as possible. For instance, you ask who made the stars. The response is: "God." To lead them to give a complete answer is a simple matter. You might say: "All right, now say it all." If they say: "God made the stars," well and good. If not, you might say: "Now *you* tell me who made the stars." Or: "Say it all." This, of course, refers to little children who are just beginning. To older children whose vocabulary has been sufficiently developed it is enough to say a few times to them: "Children, I would be glad if you always gave me a complete answer, repeating the question in the answer." When, then, such an answer is given they can be told: "That is fine," or, "That is the way I like to hear you say it."

It is well to obtain expression from the individual child. When the children respond in concert some children will generally lag far enough behind to echo the words of the others. Yet concert work is useful at times to enable the children to think together and give free expression to their ideas.

Undoubtedly the questioning method is the simplest and the most expeditious means of leading the children to reflect upon the problems of religion. Yet it should not be followed too closely. It does not always permit the children to do their full portion of the work. In this method the teacher presents the problems to them. Naturally, it would be better if the children not only solved the problems but also found them. It is, therefore, always preferable to allow the children to discover their own problems whenever this is possible.

This may sometimes be effected by simply suggesting ideas to their minds. For example: "Now, children, perhaps you would like to tell me about the sun, the moon, the plants, or something of that kind." If they do not take the suggestion, it might be added: "I am sure you can tell me many things that God had in mind when He made those things." Again it might be suggested: "Talk to me about the food you eat, the clothes you wear. Of course, you can show by these things how good our heavenly Father is to us." In repetition, it often suffices to say: "Now tell me all about the earth, the sky, the First Commandment," or whatever was under discussion.

Review is the life of teaching. If possible the

matter should always be brought up in another form or in some new connection. In repetition the teacher, who also teaches the ordinary branches, has an opportunity to correlate religious ideas with their other studies. For instance, in speaking of the earth, the seas, the mountains, a connection may readily be made with their lesson in geography.

But review should be more than mere repetition; it should entail the continued application of fundamental truths to new situations. Thus the course should form an accumulation of religious knowledge and experience. Work that has been done should be embraced by the work in hand. The past work should form a basis for the present work and the present for future work. Thus the volume of teaching should, in some measure, increase as does the snowball in the rolling. This procedure will emphasize the unity of faith in the minds and hearts of the children. Each new truth that the children meet is but a new expression of divine love. Each step in the knowledge of religion is but another manifestation of our heavenly Father.

Stories and narratives from history should occur naturally and in their proper connection with the class work. It is always a good sign if the children mention some incident or story that has a bearing

upon the subject under discussion. The ideal would be to put materials in the hands of the children that would furnish them examples for every occasion. Books on nature, the flowers, the birds, the bees, biographical works, and the lives of the saints would serve the purpose well. Where this is impossible, the teacher might have one or the other child read for the class materials that would serve for the next period of work. The teacher might also tell apt stories to them.

Plays should perhaps be reserved for the period just before dismissal. To a certain extent this exercise will naturally disrupt the regular class work. However, the teacher will be able to judge in particular cases what is the opportune time. When the teacher thus enters into the spirit of the children they will love their work.

In our system a text is put in the hands of the children. The text for the first course contains the truths treated in the first manual. At the end of each lesson in the manual the test questions given are intended to call forth these truths from the children. In the second course the text is intended to form the basis of their class work. Instead of memorizing this matter, or any part thereof, the children should be directed to read each lesson carefully.

It is not to be expected that all will do full justice to the text from the beginning. In fact, this is one of the aims we have in view: we would so interest them in religion that they will gladly read over several times the matter that is to be discussed in class.

The children should be encouraged to read the text in religion at home. It should also be suggested to them that they discuss past matter with the other members of the family — with their father and mother, sisters and brothers. To accomplish this is worth much patient effort; for it would help the children in their power of expression upon religious topics. Then, too, it would help to restore religious influence in many homes.

Furthermore, the teacher might have the subject matter read just before beginning the class work. This would freshen the ideas of those who have done their duty in that regard, and, at the same time, present the matter to the negligent. It might also be useful to have the lesson read from the text at the end of the class work. This would present to their minds anew the whole matter as a sort of summing up.

Experience shows that classes conducted thus present practically no disciplinary problems to the

teacher. However, children, like adults, are apt to be distracted and inattentive at times. If the inattention is marked and extends to many of the children, it should be a warning to the teacher. It should indicate to her that she has passed beyond the sphere of the children's interest. At once, she should endeavor to correct her methods. If, then, she fails to hold their attention, she should close the class work and take to reading or story-telling.

But particular cases of distraction or inattention should be treated as quite natural incidents. If a child sits gazing through the window, ask him to discuss the things he sees outside; but do it quite gently so as not to appear to reprimand him. It is always possible to turn these matters to the good of the whole class.

If one child is talking to another, direct a question to him without assuming to note his fault. You will thus generally satisfy his desire to talk; for indeed he was unconsciously indicating to you his inclination to express himself. If a child begins to play with a book, a pencil, or something, turn your attention to the object of his interest. Discuss it and draw a lesson from it and be thankful that a child has helped you in your work. For he has indicated his interest to you and given you

an opportunity to exemplify the truth in another way.

Try to leave the children at the end of every class period with a desire for more. This will indicate a healthy state of mind and heart on their part and it will be proof that your teaching is, as it should be, lovable.

CHAPTER XI

Class Management

The class in religion is the laboratory of religious life; it is a spiritual gymnasium in which the children are developed in spiritual well-being. Here a group of children are brought together under the direction of a teacher to attain definite results. Now definite results cannot be obtained in any form of activity except by following well-studied plans and by aiming at certain clearly determined objectives. To arrive at the desired goal of teaching it is necessary to utilize to good advantage the time and energies of the children. This can be accomplished by good management alone.

Good management, in this sense, might be taken to mean the harmonizing of all the forces in the group so as constantly to promote the best interests of each and every individual thereof. Religion belongs to the individual of human society; yet it must radiate upon the whole social group in which the individual lives. Hence the religious teacher must so direct her pupils that

the individuality of each will grow in the spiritual life while at the same time order is produced in the whole group.

The more natural and spontaneous the order of the classroom, the more it contributes to the development of the children. Control by sheer force of authority is the easy and direct method. Yet this method does not necessarily contribute to the advancement and development of the children; it tends rather to deaden the initiative of the little ones.

The earnest teacher will have in her mind a clearly defined course for each class period. She will also know clearly the manner in which the children should conduct themselves so as to attain the best results from their class work. Then with adroitness she will set about the task of producing similar plans and aims in the minds of the pupils.

In every well-regulated classroom unity of purpose should prevail. The children should have the interests of the work at heart. They should be concerned for the general welfare of the group. To engender this interest and concern the teacher should lead them to reflect upon the best modes of working together. For instance, it is impossible to conduct an orderly class when all talk indiscriminately. The children can read-

ily understand this. If one is to talk others must be silent so that he may be heard. Then, too, it is polite to listen while others are talking; it is a sign of good breeding to keep from interrupting others when they are speaking.

From the beginning the teacher should take the little ones into her confidence. She should make them feel that they are in earnest at their work. Perhaps she says: "Now, children, how do you think you can best work together?" Very often the answer will come from a child: "Keep silent," or "be still," or "stay in your place." "Very well," says the teacher; "now show me what you think is the right way." If the children have been assigned fixed places, they will generally sit quietly by to show the teacher how they should range themselves. Here the teacher will commend them for what they have done. Then she may propose to them the problem of silence and attention.

Now she might say: "Of course you want to listen to what everybody says. It is polite to listen when others are talking. Now what will you do so that you can always listen when others are speaking?" Keep silence. "Very well, now let me see how you will do it. John, would you say the Our Father so that the other children can

show how to listen and pay attention to what everybody says?" By this method it is possible to make the children realize the meaning of proper conduct. Yet it requires patient and constant care to enable them to observe the desired decorum.

When one or the other child fails to respond to the situation, great tact is required. These recalcitrants should be encouraged, not driven, to accept the established order. "Now, Mary (who is restless and noisy), show us how you think a little girl should listen to what is being said. Do you think it will be nice if all the little girls keep quiet like that? (For she is demonstrating the model little girl.) That is fine."

This does not mean that the teacher is to coax the children into order. Such procedure would soon result in confusion. The teacher must direct the minds of the children in choosing the proper conduct. Yet she should avoid reasoning with them; she should not seem to be proving to them that they should act in a given manner. She simply permits them to solve the problems of conduct that are within their capacity of judgment.

In the same manner she should correct them when they have become disorderly. A class of affectionate little tots, to whom I was teaching religion, had acquired the habit of rushing to the

door when I appeared. For the next few moments they swarmed about like bees so that it was difficult to move; I stood a helpless prisoner bound by the tender arms of the little ones. My over-indulgence had perhaps been the cause of the disorder; now it was difficult to repulse the little ones. At last I asked them to tell me what was best to do when I came. After they had told me that it would be better to remain in their places, we tried it out; I went out and reëntered. After two or three trials we succeeded and the evil was corrected.

The efforts of the teacher in matters of behavior should tend ever to develop self-control on the part of the children. The responsibility for good conduct should be placed as much as possible upon the children.

In class procedure, hurry and bustle should be avoided. All should move calmly and smoothly. The children should follow every expression in a reflective state of mind. This they will do as long as the subject under discussion touches upon their personal interests.

There should exist a spirit of common interest not only between teacher and pupils but also between pupil and pupil. This spirit can be readily engendered in the teaching of religion;

for brotherhood is a basic principle of the Christian religion. Throughout the whole course of our teaching the children are led to consider the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man in relation to the truths of religion.

This spirit of solidarity and unity should extend even to the home. The children should be encouraged to discuss with their parents and others the religious matters that are treated in their classes. This will inevitably interest parents. The interest of parents will have a good effect upon the children. This interest is increased by the home conduct of the children. When they are properly trained in religion they will become model children in the home. Seeing this the parents will encourage them in their work. This encouragement will in turn be felt in the classroom.

The classroom should be made as inviting and pleasant as possible. The children should be comfortably seated. The old method of making the children stand in a group during class recitation should be relegated to the past. The children will, like adults, find it much easier to be attentive when they are comfortable. It is well, however, to have the individual child rise when he speaks.

The classroom should be well ventilated and well lighted; it should be ever neat and clean. Our

surroundings have their psychological value for us all. We find it difficult to do mental work in the midst of unfavorable material conditions. The feeling that comes over us at house-cleaning time is well known. In the topsy-turvy of those days it is impossible almost to read the daily papers with any satisfaction. It is the same with the children; the condition of their environment communicates itself to their minds.

So also does the spirit of the teacher communicate itself to the children. Not only should she cultivate a cheerful disposition, but she should radiate interest and zeal to her pupils. Furthermore she should practice self-control to the fullest degree. Poise and self-control on the part of the teacher are the prerequisites of good management. The teacher must possess self-reliance without haughtiness; she must be at the same time firm and sympathetic; she must be both dignified and humble; she must possess prudence and simplicity; she must be just and yet merciful.

Justice demands that all children be treated with the same degree of kindness and consideration. The spirit of fairness must animate the teacher in all her dealings with the children. She must know how to moderate the ardor of those who draw too easily upon her favor and to encourage those

who hesitate in their approach to her. In every class there are children who are inclined to be forward. They are always ready to respond; they will sometimes monopolize the situation. It is often a delicate task to restrain such as these without repressing their laudable zeal. In this case they should be led to show consideration for others. When a child betrays too much ardor in talking, to the exclusion of others, you might say: "Very well; now listen to what Thomas has to say about it. I know he would like to tell us something, too."

Always there will be found leaders among the children and those who dominate the group. This power will serve for good or evil according to the tact of the teacher. To such the teacher will do well to intrust some special responsibility. Sometimes the mischievous will become apostles for good when marked confidence is placed in them.

The teacher should often have a quiet little heart-to-heart talk with these stronger and more active children. But such talks should not take the form of reprimands. They should be consultations on the subject of order and work. If an unruly boy is asked to help others keep order it often suffices to change his attitude toward the

situation. For it is the leadership rather than the mischief that he sought in his unruly conduct. Now he has a chance to lead in good conduct. A little responsibility judiciously conveyed generally has a sobering effect.

I once took two hundred children to the circus. They were children from six to twelve or thirteen years of age, unused to city life. Not one of them would have been safe if left alone in that seething crowd of fifteen or twenty thousand people. Yet the larger children not only took care of themselves but also guarded the smaller ones. It was the responsibility placed upon the larger children that made them behave so admirably that they passed through the vicissitudes of that wonderful day without the slightest evidence of misconduct or even thoughtlessness.

The classroom is the nursery of life — religious life. There, under proper supervision, the children learn to live a religious life. But since life is to be a reasonable service to God, care must be taken to avoid routine in our preparation for it. Naturally a certain regularity of movement is necessary for the order of the classroom; but this should never take on the character of mere routine. In their movements the children should be given the greatest possible liberty. For in-

stance, they should learn to pass in and out of the classroom without marching in fixed order. They will indeed learn to follow directions by the marching method or group discipline; but it is far more important to train them to create order by the exercise of their own faculties.

There are indeed certain exercises that must be performed in concert. These will enable the children to learn to follow commands and directions given for the group. The same end may be attained by drills, marches, and calisthenics. But these artificial exercises should not form the ordinary life of the classroom. Even the drills and marches can be made less artificial for the children by tact on the part of the teacher. She can first explain the desired movements. Then the children exercise their own minds in executing them. Always, the teacher should leave as much responsibility as practicable to the children; they should feel that they themselves are executing the work in hand.

Children, like adults, resent too much officiousness. The teacher should bear this in mind. She should credit them with the power to think and the will to act. She should leave them in every action with the impression that they themselves are doing it under her kind and considerate

direction. The children should feel that they are working not for the satisfaction of the teacher but for the aims inherent in the work. They will easily realize that the teacher is pleased with their success not because they have performed for her but because she rejoices in their advancement.

They should feel that the classroom is theirs, not the teacher's. They form the little community that occupies it. The classroom is their own little workshop, their little corner in which to prepare their souls for the love of God. The teacher is a devoted friend, an envoy from God, come to be with them, to guide them, to assist them in their labor of love. This sense of proprietorship will give the children the proper attitude toward their work. They will feel that they are putting their own house (spiritual house) in order. They will have personal concern for the welfare and advancement of the whole group.

With this spirit abroad the teacher can more easily inculcate neatness and tidiness in the individual child. Each pupil can be brought to see the relation of his personal appearance to the whole group. Certain standards of cleanliness and order can be established. Thus the child will learn the principle of respectability; he will learn to

consider his relation to the community in which he lives. He will acquire the motives for general cleanliness and neatness of dress so far as these relate to those about him. Such little matters as cleaning the shoes at the door before entering, of not dropping paper on the floor, of avoiding expectoration and the like become important when considered in conjunction with the consideration we owe to others. The children should learn to observe these proprieties, not because they have been imposed upon them, but because the love of our neighbor demands them.

CHAPTER XII

Coördination

It is an established principle that our teaching must always begin with the child. Furthermore, religion must permeate the whole life of the child. Religious training must extend to all the knowledge and experience of the child; else it is defective. Hence there must be a proportion between religious development and natural development. The spiritual man must know how to apply the principles of religion to all the vicissitudes of life. He must apply them to his moral, his intellectual, his civic, and his industrial or professional life; else he is not secure in his religion. The educated needs more knowledge of religion than the untutored.

In fact, all profane knowledge must be coördinated with religion. Thus the teacher of religion will do well to apply the principles of religion to all the studies of the children. This does not mean that she is to moralize upon the topics of human knowledge. Nor does it mean that she is to show the relation of every arithmetical problem and every grammatical rule to religion. But

she should so imbue the children with religion that they themselves will be able to make the application. The children must learn, by our teaching, to reflect upon God's place in their lives and in the universe. When they have done this, they will have learned the general rule by which to find the relation of all their human knowledge to God and to religion.

Reading and writing may be related in many ways to religion. Writing is the expression of thoughts on paper by words formed thereon, and reading is the art of deciphering the meaning thereof. First of all, writing implies the power to think. Again, the power to think entails the existence of a soul by which we are distinguished from the brute. Here we are face to face with God's bounty. Then there are the writing materials — paper, ink, pen. All are gifts of divine providence. What a blessing to have these things! The thoughts and knowledge of other men can, by means of writing, be transmitted down the centuries.

Then there is that infinity of combinations, the countless number of volumes that are composed from those twenty-six little signs, the alphabet. What a wondrous intellect God has given to man to enable him to accomplish this! Surely then

man is made to the image and likeness of God. These little words are capable of expressing truth. But what is truth? Why is a horse a horse, a man a man? No; it did not depend upon the arbitrary will of mankind. Truth is of a higher order than any figment of the human mind. Truth it is that tells us that things are what they are. Error says that they are what they are not. Error is indeed the product of the human mind. But truth can come from none other than the Author of all things. Things are true when they harmonize with the creative idea from which they were made. All this is suggested by the little words that we write.

But reading adds to this store of religious thought. There is the wonderful human eye that can glance at those written words and by some mysterious power transmit to the mind (to the soul) the thoughts which they contain. This leads to a consideration of God's bounty in making us such marvelous creatures. We are able not only to take these written thoughts into our own mind but we are able to communicate them to others by our power of speech. Here we have another loving gift of God. What a bleak world this would be were we not endowed with the power of speech! Then the consideration of that blessed

faculty of conversing with one another directs our thoughts to the human voice, another gift of God's love. Thence again we are led naturally to the consideration of the human ear by which these word sounds are transmitted to our soul.

From the simple studies of reading and writing we are led to the consideration of literature, that boundless treasury of human knowledge and experience. Furthermore, it carries us on naturally until we contemplate the Sacred Writings which were set down for mankind by the direct inspiration of God Himself.

Mathematics, too, has its message of God for us. It, too, proclaims the dignity of man as a rational creature, endowed with an immortal soul which distinguishes him from the beast. But it also suggests the contemplation of God in many other ways. There is the simple arithmetical problem, two and two are four. But why are two and two four? Who decided that two and two are always to be four? Who is able to change it and make two and two five? No; it was not man who determined that simple truth. Two and two would still be four though all the men of earth denied it. Two and two are four in the mind of God. Thus we are led to consider the source of truth, which is God.

Here again is that wondrous combination of signs. All the mathematical problems of the world are composed of just ten little numbers. With these numbers we can but feebly attempt to enumerate the blessings of God and measure His works. Algebra, the science of equations and relations in numbers, serves to show the order and unity in the mind of God. It demonstrates how essentially the truth is woven together. For it assumes that the unknown quantities must agree with the known. The x, y, z quantities are just as clear to the mind of God and just as constant as are the a, b, c quantities.

Geometry, the science of angles, enables us to gain some idea of God's wondrous creation. We measure the distance from planet to planet, from star to star, and are lost in admiration of God's handiwork.

The axiom says that the straight line measures the shortest distance between two points. Why is it so? It was not man who made it so. Long before Euclid formulated his axiom, it was true; it was true in the mind of God from all eternity. It is one of those truths that belong to the essence of things; it postulates a divine intelligence from which it emanates.

Geography reveals to us the extent and the

wonders of the habitation which God has made for us here. It describes the different countries of earth, their fruits, and their products. It indicates rich and fertile valleys; it points out the great mountain ranges. It depicts the rivers, the lakes, and the oceans, the avenues of man's commerce with man. It is all a picture of God's goodness and bounty.

In their study of lands and regions, the children can be readily led one step farther to contemplate the beneficent Author of all. They will marvel to see how the God of nature has made provision for life in every habitable clime. In the Southlands, He has covered man and animals with a dark skin to protect them from the direct rays of the sun. In the North, He has given them a lighter covering so that the weak, slanting rays of sunshine may warm life for them. He has made life possible in the lands of the far North by supplying abundance of fats for food and furs for clothing. Thus every detail of the study points to new evidence of God's love and bounty.

Then geology reveals the treasures that God has stored in the earth for the benefit of His earthly children. There are the inexhaustible beds of coal to supply heat for mankind. There, too, are the rich ores — iron, copper, lead, gold,

silver. All proclaim the bounty of a loving Creator. Oil and gas also abound there in the field of the geologist. They are further manifestations of a loving Father's care. And the precious stones that are hidden there serve for the joy and adornment of those same children. To study the strata, the geological periods, the action of eons and eons upon the surface of the earth is but to learn more and more of God's greatness and glory.

The astronomer introduces us to a more wondrous field in which the glory and the power of God are made manifest. There in the firmament we see the order and the design, the regular movement of the heavenly bodies, all of which proclaim the glory of God. Why did God create millions of stars and planets? It was that we might learn therefrom something of the power and the splendor that belong to Him with whom we are destined to dwell for eternity.

Thus all science should lead us nearer to God; it is but a study of His handiwork. It is the investigation of effects which should always lead to the First Cause and Creator who is God. Biology is the study of life which should ever lead to the Author of life Himself. It is the same with anatomy and anthropology. Back of the

wonders that we find here we should see ever the eternal hand of God. Likewise, all the branches of medicine should be but a prelude to the knowledge of God's goodness and mercy. Men spend their lives in scientific research for the remedies which God has stored away in the material world to alleviate the ills and sufferings of mankind.

History, too, the science of human life, should point the way to God. Where are now those men of the past, many of whom perhaps refused to recognize their God? For what did they live and struggle? To what end did they spend their laborious days and nights in the search of knowledge and learning? Was it merely to prepare themselves for dissolution when the days of achievement had but fairly begun? No; it all points to immortality and eternal life. God would not be God did He endow men with the godlike faculty of reason by which he could yearn for endless life and then let him sink back into the despair of nothingness.

The study of law deals with the norms of justice and equity. But whence come these norms? Man cannot change them, nor could he have invented them. They are intended to rule the lives of men. Hence they all belong to a higher

order. They are from the Maker of man. Justice is justice in so far only as it accords with the idea of justice that exists in the mind of God. Not all the courts of earth could change the idea of justice; for that is above the sphere of man. Liberty — whence does it acquire its meaning? To learn this we must go beyond the horizon of human devices; we must go back to Him who endowed man with that noble faculty of liberty.

Music, the "concord of sweet sounds," should ever whisper to the soul about its God. Think of all the musical productions, the harmonious combination of those seven elemental sounds! Then there are all the instruments from which these sweet sounds may be drawn. We are moved to laughter, to tears, to joy, to sadness, by the product of these lifeless materials. As the soft, majestic notes of a pulsing organ fill the walls of the church, we are almost transported. But whence come these sweet sounds that are blended so harmoniously here? Man's genius has long since been expended in an attempt to draw them forth and arrange them so as to reveal their beauty and power in combinations of harmony. But it was God who put these sweet sounds in the natural world. It was He who made the reed, the cord, the metal, and the like capable of repro-

ducing them. It was He who fashioned the human voice so that it can reproduce these seven created sounds in notes of sweet song. All this God did for the same reason as He taught the little birds to sing. He did it to make His children happy here upon earth.

Always the notes of music should lift our hearts to God. Speaking of music, Cardinal Newman says: "Is it possible that that inexhaustible evolution and disposition of notes, so rich yet so simple, so intricate yet so regulated, so various yet so majestic, should be a mere sound, which is gone and perishes? Can it be that those mysterious stirrings of heart, and keen emotions, and strange yearnings after we know not what, and awful impressions from we know not whence, should be wrought in us by what is unsubstantial, and comes and goes, and begins and ends in itself? It is not so; it cannot be. No, they have escaped from some higher sphere; they are the outpourings of eternal harmony in the medium of created sound; they are the echoes from our Home; they are the voice of Angels; or the Magnificat of Saints, or the living laws of Divine Governance, or the Divine Attributes; something they are besides themselves, which we cannot compass, which we cannot utter — though mortal man,

and he perhaps not otherwise distinguished above his fellows, has the gift of eliciting them." [1]

Thus, like music, all the arts and sciences have an intimate relation to God, and hence to religion. It is always the relation of the creature to the Creator. To make men constantly conscious of their relation to God is a primary work of religious training.

But secular knowledge should be correlated logically to religion. It is neither advisable nor practicable to apply artificial coördination between the secular branches and religion. The coördination should be made to the subject matter of each study rather than to the work of study. It should be, as it were, a kind of implicit coördination.

By this is meant that the power of reflection should be so developed in the children as to enable them to see the relation of all their studies to religion. They should so comprehend the workings of divine Providence that they will recognize its manifestations in all their investigations. Thus, for example, to practice reading and writing solely upon religious topics and narratives would be a kind of artificial coördination. But if a child learns to thank God for the faculty to read and

[1] Oxford University Sermons, "The Theory of Development in Religious Doctrine."

write and if he learns to reflect upon these gifts of God he has coördinated well the subjects of reading and writing with religion.

Our work is to train the little ones so that they will naturally take the Christian viewpoint in all their thought and activity. We must aid them to develop their perceptive powers and their powers of reflection so that they will see the bounty of God written upon the pages of all their books and reflect upon His love in all their studies. To help the children acquire this attitude of mind we must use great tact and circumspection. We must aid them in the formation of the proper thought modes. It may not suffice merely to lead the children, for instance, to realize that God planted the musical sounds in the material world. We must aid them to form the intellectual habit of listening to music from the standpoint of divine love, as it were.

To this end suggestion may be used. If there is question of mentioning the sweet sounds that come from a harp or other instrument, instead of saying: "It is wonderful how these sweet sounds can come from those strings," say: "It is wonderful what sweet sounds God has put in those strings."

Thus it should be in general, our expression should assume, take for granted, God's work.

The implication is stronger than would be a direct assertion. For example, in mentioning the movement of the heavenly bodies, it should be said: "God guides the earth in its course," rather than simply: "The earth follows its course." Instead of saying: "There is abundance of minerals in the earth," say: "God has put abundance of minerals in the earth." Where the thoughtless and the unbeliever would say: "Nature has been lavish in her beauty," say: "God has been lavish in bestowing beauty on nature."

This manner of expression suggests God's relation to all things. It is a true Christian mode of thought that should become habitual with our people. The materialist knows well how to use this form of suggestion to promote his hopeless ideas. He refers to the works of Nature, the Biocosmos, or the Universal Mind with utter complacency. Thus he correlates human knowledge with materialism.

Human knowledge should always lead to God. The human intellect was made for truth; and God is truth. Whenever, then, the human mind finds truth, it finds that which comes from the mind of God. It is our mission to lead young minds to discover this relation between human knowledge and God.

CHAPTER XIII

The Presentation of the Matter

Repetition and correlation are two important factors in the educational process. The mind acquires knowledge through a certain familiarity with the truth. Thus truths, ideas, facts, and experiences must recur frequently if they are to become familiar to the mind. Yet repetition in our class procedure must be something more than a mere recurrence of expressions. The ideas that go to form the body of our teaching should be introduced and reintroduced with persistent frequency; yet ever they must be naturally and logically correlated to new situations. They must ever be presented in new settings and in new associations; thus they will not become trite but will retain their original freshness.

This correlation of ideas is of vital importance in the training of children. Our teaching is a formative process, a building and molding of the mind and character. But character depends primarily upon the order that exists in the rational life of the man. It is not enough to possess knowl-

edge and truth; there must also be *order* in our intellectual life. There is a familiar expression which explains this: "The well-ordered mind." The mental stores of man, like tools and materials in a workshop, must be kept in order, properly grouped, each item in its proper place, else their practical value will be impaired.

Ideas, like man, seem to be social entities; they shun solitude and move and exist in groups. Thus we have environmental influence of idea upon idea according to their respective associations. It is well known in everyday life that certain ideas are linked together, one thought suggesting another. If you follow the course of your thoughts back into old memories you will soon find yourself following an unbroken chain of which your past experiences are the links. So manifest is this psychological phenomenon that we may readily assume that there are certain lines or processions of ideas which extend from our early childhood to the end of our lives. Try to go back in memory by the free association of ideas and you will probably be surprised at the result. This can be done by simply following the line of thought that suggests itself to the mind.

Whatever be the nature of these intellectual and moral groupings they certainly play an im-

portant rôle in men's lives. Ideas cluster together, one calling upon the other. Men are often deterred from crime by some simple object that reminds them of their early childhood. A word may recall tender sentiments from the past.

Why is it that men are so often moved in later life by the thought of mother? It is because with that thought are associated the idealized joys of childhood and all that goes with early innocence and simplicity. Let your mind wander back to childhood's memories and you will realize the great truth herein contained.

It is thus the divine truth must be presented to the children; its teachings must be linked together in their proper relation to the everyday life of the children. Our teaching must lead the children to reflect upon the truth ever from new angles and in new applications to their life. Thus repetition becomes the practice of coördination and correlation.

About each idea of divine truth must be grouped the ideas that are to be influenced or colored by the truth in that particular. For instance, the Fourth Commandment says: "Honor thy father and thy mother." Here it is not enough to teach children the duty of obedience. They must learn, in conjunction with this precept, the

true concept of parental authority, the meaning of the Christian home, the means of making the home happy, the proper social and religious virtues that belong in the home. Yet it will not suffice to inculcate filial respect and obedience in this sole connection, under the heading of the Fourth Commandment. The duty of children toward their parents must be presented in many different relations. When talking about our heavenly Father and His gentle love and care, we should mention His representatives in this particular; to wit, our parents. Whenever there is question of obeying God there should be mention of parental authority. In treating the Commandments, the Church, the Sacraments (especially Matrimony) impress upon children their duty toward their parents.

Thus it is with all our teaching — we arrange the ideas in their proper setting for the children. We present them in their proper relation one to the other and to their lives. Thus we may hope that in all the junctures of later life the children will know how to apply the truth to their actions.

Repetition is also necessary to acquaint the children with the terminology of religion. They should learn to know these terms as they acquired their ordinary knowledge, or as they made the

acquaintance of persons whom they know. First the reality itself, the thing, is presented to them; then they acquire the idea of it, and finally they learn the term that designates it. It is thus a small child becomes acquainted with friends and neighbors who visit the family. First it sees only a man; then as his visits recur it recognizes the man it had seen before. Finally, after hearing his name often, it learns to call him Mr. Worthington or Mr. Harrington, or whatever his name may be.

In the teachings of faith as defined by the Church we have such terms as infallibility, indefectibility, inspiration, transubstantiation, and the like. Certainly it is desirable that the children should eventually become familiar with these terms which have been adopted by the divine authority of the Church to define clearly the distinction between truth and error. To deny the doctrine of transubstantiation is heresy: yet millions have loved the Holy Eucharist unto eternal life though they were wholly ignorant of the term. Ah, but they knew well the truth itself; they knew that, when the priest pronounces those mystic words, the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ.

He who knows that the Catholic Church will,

by the assistance of God, last until the end of the world, knows the meaning of indefectibility though he may never have heard the term. He who knows that the Catholic Church (and the Pope), by the assistance of the Holy Ghost, must ever teach the truth, knows the full meaning of infallibility. He who knows that God told the sacred writers what to write in the Bible understands biblical inspiration.

When the children have learned the meaning of the truth, their minds are prepared for the terminology. It is as when you ask of a man whose figure has grown familiar: "What is that man's name?" When the children have become familiar with the truths of religion, the terms used in expressing these truths will have a meaning for them.

But always the truth must be prepared and fitted to the mind of the child. In our teaching we must ever have in mind that the child observes as a child, reasons as a child. He must arrive at generalizations by due mental process. Hence our teaching must ever begin with the concrete, and indeed with those concrete things which are related to the life of the child. It is not enough to simplify the truth; it must be put in a practical form as contradistinguished from

the theoretical form. Furthermore, we must avoid complexity of ideas in our propositions so as to guard against "routine learning" on the part of the children.

For instance, God made us to know Him, to love Him, to serve Him in this world and to be happy with Him forever in heaven. This is a complex sentence containing many truths. If it is learned in early life it is apt to be a mere generalization having no practical value in the life of the child. However, after the child has assimilated the individual truths contained in this complex proposition, he may learn to state it with meaning to himself.

The individual clauses are simple enough; but the complexity is confusing to the beginner. It is like a child who has taken more in his mouth than he can masticate. But even this is not the prime reason for considering the truths of our proposition singly. By taking them one by one it is much easier to enable the child to consider the meaning and importance of each. Thus the truths might be separated one from the other.

(1) God made us, (2) God wants us to know Him, (3) We must learn to know Him here on earth, (4) God wants us to love Him, (5) We must love Him on earth, (6) God wants us to serve

Him, (7) We must serve Him on earth, (8) God wants us to be happy forever, (9) He wants us to go to heaven, (10) There he wants us to be with Him forever.

In this form these truths seem simple enough; however, this mental pabulum is not yet digestible to little minds. These little truths may still be theoretical to the child. The simple monosyllabic "God made us," if proposed as it stands, may never become practical knowledge to the child; it may never bring realization to him so as to influence his life. To become practical it must be correlated to his previous knowledge and experience; it must become the product of his own reflection. It must, in fine, be a conclusion at which he arrives after a due progression of thought.

In like manner the words: "We must know God" may be only a theory in the mind, so much mental lumber. But to know God in truth is practical. To know that God is our Father, that He cares for us as His children, that He loves us, that He tells us about Himself so that we will know how good He is, that He is helping us to be good so that we may go to heaven, that He wants us with Him forever in heaven because He loves us, this has a meaning in the life of the child.

To arrive at this knowledge of God, of truth, we

must approach it from the standpoint of the child. Turn the child's thought to himself, to his babyhood perhaps. Ask him about the little baby at home; then lead him to consider his father and mother and their loving care for him. You have now led him to the problem: "Who gave you to your parents?" Then naturally follows the problem: "Where did God get you?" Without this procedure the question: "Who made you?" might never logically present itself to the mind of the child.

After this procedure, the child's knowledge of God is quite natural. No precept is needed to tell him to know God, just as it was never necessary to command him to become acquainted with his father and mother. Love draws him to them; he is desolate when he is kept long away from them. Know them? He is interested in every little thing they do. It is thus with the knowledge and love and service of God. The child must grow not merely to know that he must know, love, and serve God on earth; he must know that our earthly life is a preparation for eternal life. He must be filled with the firm conviction that to obtain eternal life he must serve God, that to love God impels us to serve Him, and to know God is to love Him.

In this manner the truth becomes his own. The child has acquired it in the joy of exercising his own faculties. For indeed man finds his joy in the exercise of his own powers. This is manifest especially in little children. The little girl goes to market with mother. On their return, while mother carries the basket, the child must have something to carry, too. Thus she exercises her physical powers. If, at home, the same little one is trying to sew a frock for her doll, or attempting to write a few illegible letters of the alphabet, she is offended if some kind but unthinking adult usurps her task to help her.

This desire of children "to do" was exemplified one day at a bathing beach. A little lad of six who had been playing in the sand came bathed in tears toward the cottage. On investigation it was learned that he had been engaged, somewhat unsuccessfully, perhaps, in building a sand tunnel under a mountain which he had made. His older brother had thrust his assistance upon him, had taken the spade "just to help him and to show him how to do it." But it took his joy away; it deprived him of the satisfaction which comes from the exercise of our own faculties.

This suggests the rule for the teacher: Let the children exercise their own faculties of mind and

heart in the work of religion. Thus it will be theirs when the work is done; it will be the growth and achievement of their own life. We must, therefore, cultivate the desire "to do" and "to know" in the children. We must prepare their minds for the truth. Wherefore, before attempting to present the truth to the mind of the child, we must know its relation to his life. We must know the interests of the child to which the truth is related and to these we must turn the child's consideration.

But our teaching is to be formative: it is to give a new form and character to a human life. Hence we must ever have a clear idea of the position the particular truths are to hold in that life. We are now laying the foundations, building the walls of that structure which we call religious life. Like good architects, we must build wisely. To do this we must know the value and characteristics of our materials; and we must have a clearly defined plan for our work. We must present the truth so that throughout life for the child, it will embrace all the problems and situations for which it was intended.

Thus, for instance, the Seventh Commandment says: "Thou shalt not steal." But we must present this teaching so that it will form the basis

of all honesty, justice, and trustworthiness. From our teaching the children must learn the meaning of justice and apply it to their lives. It must enable them, in all situations that may arise throughout their whole life, to follow the norms and the spirit of righteousness and honor in all their dealings with their fellow men.

Hence it must ever be borne in mind what manner of man we would form by our teaching. We must be patient with details, more patient than the surgeon at work on the vitals of a human organism, more patient than the sculptor polishing the marble of his masterpiece. We must realize that the smallest impressions may be of grave importance in the future life of the children. We must realize that our work is to engender in them the process of Christian thought and action. It is thus we help the children grow in wisdom and prudence. Thus we train their heart and their judgment in divine truth. To train their heart we present the truth to them ever from the angle of divine love; we cultivate in them the qualities that make for true Christian character. To train their judgment we lead them to see the due proportion of things; we give the divine truths of faith their proper valuation in terms of their own lives.

In all this, the guiding principle is the life of the child. The teacher should ever be ready to utilize any interests or inclinations which the children may manifest. She must follow the child whithersoever he goes; but she must direct him in the way. In other words, if the child be filled with interests of the moment, do not attempt to turn him from them to other interests, but utilize them for the purpose in hand. The teacher, having a definite aim in mind, should select from the experiences and conversations of the children those that will lend themselves to the lesson planned. For instance, if a child has just seen a street-car wreck, let him tell you about it. If you can find a point of contact with the lesson, well and good; otherwise, turn his mind to something else that is more directly related to the matter in hand. Thus all the truths of faith should be taught in their proper relation to the life of the child. Each truth should be presented in its proper correlation and association. Each truth should be the center of a whole field of thought. It is thus the teachings of faith should be presented to the children.

CHAPTER XIV

God

Nothing has a real meaning for children, perhaps, except that which is related to their lives. Nothing, at least, influences their lives except that which they conceive in relation to their lives. Wherefore it behooves us so to present God to the minds of the children that they will conceive Him in His true relation to themselves.

If men form the proper concept of God in early life, He will be ever their Emmanuel, God with them. True Christian life is a spiritual union with God upon earth. But love is the bond of spiritual union whether between man and man or between God and man. Wherefore if man is to lead a life of union with God he must conceive God as lovable. It is for this reason that we present God to the children as a loving Father. Then all our teaching on God and religion is intended to make the child reflect upon God's love and bounty.

To present God as the Creator of all things, the

first Cause, the Maker of the universe, means generally to confuse the young mind with the idea of a terrible, abstract power, an awful Omnipotence. This concept of God as Creator, though it be dogmatically correct, may easily exist apart from love. To attempt to produce love in the child by defining the divine attributes were like essaying to engender filial affection in him by expounding the physiology of his father and mother. True, the child must learn the attributes of God. But he must see in them the instruments of divine love; then they will draw him to God. For he learns to know them through the manifestations of divine Providence, and through the communications of a loving Father.

In our courses of religion we begin with the Lord's Prayer; we suppose that the child has already learned to say this prayer at home. Then and thenceforth the whole burden of our teaching is to make the child realize the full meaning of those two words: "Our Father." He who realizes fully that God is our Father has absorbed the soul and the essence of religion. If then God takes His place in his mind and heart as Father, he will, in turn, be a true child of God; he will strive to live in a manner worthy of his sonship. But to realize that God is our Father

and to love Him as a Father the child must know and feel the love of God in his life.

To make the child know and feel God's love we must follow the child's mode of thought. He considers virtue, goodness, bounty, love in their effects. Abstract ideas form no part of his mental store. Goodness for him means: father is good, mother is good. They are good because they do things that please him and make him happy. He sees the goodness and love of his parents in the concrete. It is thus we must present the goodness and the love of God to him. To say: God is the Giver of life, is a universal truth. To bring it home to the children we must translate it into a concrete and particular truth. Then it means: God gave me my life: God gave life to my father and mother, to my brothers and sisters, to all the people in the world. He also gave life to the animals — horses, cows, sheep, dogs; to the trees, the plants, the flowers.

But their minds must be prepared for even these simple, concrete truths. We must begin with the child, with the little things of his life. We must begin with the simple and obvious favors and manifestations of life and through these lead to the consideration of life itself.

Ours is a rational life; we possess an immortal

soul. The child must learn to know that God gave us a soul. To him, however, *soul* is but an empty term. So we must direct his mind to contemplate the manifestations of the soul. Man is different from the brute; he can think; he can will; he can love. These things the brute cannot do. When we die, our soul still lives. After our body is dead, we can still know and think; we can will; we can remember. Our soul will live forever. Such is the soul which God has given us.

God is the Creator of all things, is a plain and simple statement of a great truth. Yet in this form it bears no relation to the life of the child. But: *God made the world for us to live in*, correlates the truth to the child. God filled the world with good things for us. He made the sun, the moon, the stars, the lands, the seas, the animals, the plants, all, all for us. He made them from nothing; He made them out of love for us; for we are His children.

Thus the creation of the world touches the life of the child. The earth is a dwelling place made for us by our heavenly Father. Besides the bounty with which He has provided for our needs, God has adorned this dwelling place with beauty out of love for us. The heavenly bodies are like

clusters of electric lights to brighten our earthly home: the clouds, the sunrise, the sunset, the moonlight are like beautiful paintings on the walls. The grass, the verdure, the flowers are like a beautiful carpet on the floor of a home prepared by loving parents for their children. From these concrete things the children easily arrive at a clear perception of God's love and bounty. But God is ever ready to forgive bad people. They need only be sorry and promise to be good. Ah, then, God is merciful; that is what it means to forgive in this manner.

The children know the difference between good and evil. God rewards all that is good; He blesses all the people in the world when even little children ask Him. But God hates all that is evil; those who do evil must suffer. It is thus they learn that God is just. It is not enough to tell the children that God is just, holy, merciful. These are indeed dogmas revealed for our belief. Yet God revealed His goodness, His holiness, His love, His mercy in His works. It is by reflection upon the works of God that we learn to know these divine attributes. In the same manner the children must learn that God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. It is always the inductive process of knowledge. Nor does this militate

against faith. In fact, strong faith needs a firm basis of reason upon which to stand. These findings of the human reason are the preamble, the motives which make faith a "rational service" to God.

Our teaching must form deep and lasting convictions in the mind and heart of the children. It must aid them in the formation of principles to guide their lives. Wherefore it must give them the proper concept of their own life, the proper attitude toward God, toward their fellow men, and toward the world. Here, then, in considering the spiritual and material benefits which God has bestowed upon us we must learn, at the same time, the proper attitude that is to be taken toward them. Life and its material blessings are not given to our absolute dominion. All these things still belong to God — our soul, our body, our life, the material blessings around us. They are given over to our care; we are stewards of God. To Him we must render an account of all that He has intrusted to our keeping.

This great and fundamental truth should be engendered in the minds of the children from the beginning. It is, in a sense, the basis of the whole moral order. If my life belongs to God, it is reasonable indeed that He should deter-

mine the manner in which I am to live. If all things belong to God, it is very proper that I use them as He directs. If my soul belongs to God, He can surely require that my thoughts be pure. If my body belongs to Him, I must certainly use it according to His will. And if all things belong to God, my possessions are not absolute. My unfortunate fellow man has a right to expect that charity will prompt me to share my good things with him. It is then clear why God has imposed upon me the *duty* of helping my fellow man in his needs.

All this must be inculcated in the progress of the child's acquaintance with life. From the moment he learns by reflection that he possesses life, a soul, a body, he should recognize God's dominion. Not for one hour should he consider the blessings of life as absolutely his own. For even in that short period he may assume an attitude that will injure his moral and religious life.

But these convictions cannot be directly communicated. They must grow from the consideration of the truth in its minutest detail. The teacher, however, must know how to direct the thought of the child so that the desired result will be attained. If a child learns to-day that

God has determined the manner in which it is to partake of bread and milk in the morning, it may learn to-morrow that God has determined the manner in which it must use its reason, its will, its eyes, its ears, all its powers and faculties.

It is the same with our attitude toward others. It is not enough to tell the children that God is our Father; we are all God's children united in one big family — brothers and sisters. They must learn to know this truth in practice. They must live the brotherhood, even now in their childhood. This will bring conviction. The children pray for one another; they pray for others; they pray for all the people in the world. They are kind to others, helping those in need. They are cheerful and pleasant, trying to make others happy. They use good manners to show respect for others. All this will develop the realization of that great truth which bespeaks the universal brotherhood.

Thus our teaching must exercise the children themselves in the great truths of religion. They must learn to accept in fact the relations that they hold to God and their fellow men. Day by day they must grow in the conviction and the feeling that God is our Father; we are children

of God; the earth is our temporary dwelling place; heaven is our true home.

In thus presenting God to the children we give them a true concept of Him; we appeal to their whole being. With the idea of God is associated all that is good, holy, and noble. And with the ideas of goodness, holiness, and nobility are correlated the ideas of joy and hope and happiness.

We must so direct the minds of the children that they will arrive at the comprehension of the great truths about God. God made the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the plants, the animals. He made me; He made you; He made all the people in the world. He made all things. It is easy after this for even the little child to understand that God is almighty, all-powerful, omnipotent.

Then God is here with us; He is with father and mother; He is with the people in every city; He is in every country of the world; He was with all the people that ever lived; He is with the angels and saints. God is so wonderful that He can be in heaven and on earth at the same time. He is there at all times and in all places. He was there when the people used to hear Mass in the catacombs; He was there when the Apostles taught the people; He was there when the brethren

of Joseph cast him in the well; He was with Abraham, with Noah, with Adam and Eve. Ah, then God is everywhere; He is omnipresent.

God knows me; He knows you; He knows all that we know; He knows all the people in the world; He knows all the animals; He knows the stars and planets; He knows the grains of sand on the seashore. In a word, God knows all things; He is omniscient.

Of course this is a slow and tedious process; but it is the process of growth. It is only by patient labor and waiting that we can superintend the development of the young mind in its knowledge of God. But there is no other way; it is the way of life.

CHAPTER XV

Divine Revelation

The mystery of the Blessed Trinity consists in this, that there are three distinct persons in God who is, at the same time, one and indivisible. While the three divine persons are really distinct one from the other, they are equal in all things, possessing one and the same divine nature. The Father is the first person; the Son is the second person; the Holy Ghost is the third person. Yet all three are eternal.

We know the mystery of the Blessed Trinity through divine revelation as interpreted and taught by the Catholic Church. To teach the children the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity we must find a point of contact with their lives. This is not so difficult as it may appear. God has already taken His place in the plane of the children's experience. They have learned that He is our Father who watches over us with love and bounty. All that they have hitherto learned about God has been correlated to their lives

through the instrumentality of the material world and their family experiences.

Now, however, they are to consider God as He is known through divine revelation. Here, too, they must learn to know Him as a God of love, our heavenly Father. Hence they must acquire a competent idea of divine revelation and its transmission to us. To introduce the little ones to the truth of divine revelation, we lead them to speak about their home life. Soon they are eagerly telling us about the things that father and mother have told them. They have told them about things that happened before the children were born. They have told them about places where the children have never been, where they lived, perhaps, when they were little. They have told them about people they used to know long before the children were born.

Now the children's minds are turned to our heavenly Father. He, too, is a loving Father; He, too, has told us about Himself; He has told us about things that happened before we were born, before Adam and Eve were made, before the world was made, before the angels were created. He has told us about a place where none of us has ever been, about heaven. He has told us about beings whom we have never seen, the angels.

How simple it all is! The narrations of parents to their children about the past and the unknown are human revelation. The narrations of our heavenly Father are divine revelation. But if God has spoken to us about Himself, about the angels, and about heaven, the children are curious to know when and to whom He told these things. They are ready to learn how these things have been handed down to us.

Thus in a quite natural way they arrive at a knowledge of the Patriarchs, the Prophets, our Lord, the Apostles, the Bible, the Church. God spoke to some holy men, the Patriarchs and Prophets. Then our Lord Himself came from heaven to tell us more than all the others. Then He sent the Apostles to teach us. But more wonderful still, God wrote many of these things in a book. Yes, God wrote a book; it is called the Bible. Of course God did not write it with His own hand; He had some holy men write it for Him, telling them every word they were to write.

This gives the children a comprehensive view of divine revelation, the sacred Scriptures, and verbal inspiration. It will serve them well throughout life. But one question still remains to be answered. It is now well-nigh two thousand

years since our Lord and the Apostles died. How have these sayings reached us in these latter days? Behold, how logically we arrive at the concept and mission of the Church! The Catholic Church teaches us all that our Lord and the Apostles taught; it teaches us what God told the Patriarchs and Prophets; it tells us what the words of the Bible mean. God, our heavenly Father, in His love for us, His children, sent the Catholic Church to teach us these things. And to make sure that the Catholic Church would always teach the truth, God the Holy Ghost came to stay with it until the end of the world.

It is all wonderful indeed. It shows God's fatherly love for His children. But what did God tell us about Himself? God told us that there are three divine persons in Him, all one and the same God. They are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. All three are eternal, unchangeable, almighty, all-knowing, all-seeing. That is enough for us — God has told it to us. God is all-good and all-knowing. Whatever God tells us must be true. This is the reasonable motive for our faith. Surely there are things in heaven, in God's life, more wonderful than the things we see around us. Now we know something of them, for our heavenly Father Himself has told us.

In all this teaching there are many ideas upon which the children should reflect. To make them realize the eternity and the immutability of God such terms are used: God was always God; the Father was always God; the Son was always God; the Holy Ghost was always God; God will always be God; the Father will always be God; God was always just as He is now; God will always be just as He is now. The unity of God, in view of the three divine persons, must be impressed upon the children. The three divine persons are one God. Here the folly of the pagans who believed in many gods can be cited to emphasize the unity of God. In the end, after they have become familiar with the idea, they learn the term by which the three divine persons together are designated — the Blessed Trinity.

Throughout the whole course of this teaching the love of God for us is being made manifest to the children. The truth appeals not only to their intellect but also to their emotions. This is as it should be, else it will scarcely produce fruits in their life.

The Angels. We have already introduced the angels. The children know that God has told us about them. Then, too, the subject of the angels seems to appeal in an especial manner to

the children. They can be led readily to reflect that God created the angels and that He made them so that He could love them and be loved by them. They will be eager to hear what we communicate to them about the angels. The angels have no eyes, ears, hands, feet. Yet they can see, hear, do things, and move about very rapidly. They can know much more than we know. They are spirits. God is a spirit. All this is interesting to the children; but now they conceive a practical knowledge of our guardian angels, a knowledge that will become immediately operative in their lives.

We approach the teaching on their guardian angels through their own little friendships. Children are very fond of their little friends and playmates. They have already learned what wonderful creatures are the angels, how good and pure and loving they are. Of course every child, when it is proposed, would be glad to have an angel for a friend. It generally causes a perceptible joy when the knowledge of their guardian angel is thus presented to them. Just think how good God is to give each one of us a dear angel to go with us all the time! It is another proof of God's love. This dear angel friend was sent to us to watch over us and help us be good. God sent

him to help us on the way to heaven. Our guardian angel loves us very much. Day and night he goes with us; he puts good thoughts into our minds; he speaks to us in our hearts.

Here it is well to particularize the suggestions of this holy spirit. He tells us to love God, to obey our parents, to say our prayers, to go to Mass, to avoid bad company. And then, in turn, the children must learn to love their guardian angel, to pray to him. The children are filled with wonderment when they learn that the dear angels can talk without words. They can put thoughts in our minds without forming words. Here we take occasion to make them realize better the nature of the human soul; it, too, is a spirit. When the body dies it will think, will, and remember as do the angels. God is the greatest spirit. So our soul is like God and the angels. At this juncture we can also mention the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is queen of the angels. Thus God's blessed Mother will be associated with the angels. The fact can also be touched upon that the angels are often mentioned in the Bible. As the courses proceed these references to Holy Scripture will be extended.

The Devils. After considering the angels, it is easy for the children to pass to the teaching upon

the devils. Again they are led to reflect upon the love, beauty, and holiness of the angels. Then they learn that some of the angels refused to obey God. It was a terrible thing to do! Those beautiful creatures would not do what God told them. They turned against Him and disobeyed Him; for this they were changed into devils. Then they were cast down into hell to stay there forever.

God loved the angels; He created them to be with Him in heaven forever. Yet some turned against Him; they followed their proud leader, Lucifer; they began to hate God. So it is their own fault; they rejected God's love. Now they are separated from God forever. This all happened because they were too proud to obey God. They thought they could get along without God. That is the way people think who do not obey God. Now the devils hate us because we love God; they are jealous of God because we love Him. So they try to take us away from God; they try to make us disobey God. They want to take people to hell so that they will not be with God in heaven.

Thus the children are led, step by step, to realize the malice of diabolical temptation. Withal they are ever led to reflect on God's love. God sent

a good angel to each one of us to help us avoid the evil suggestions of the devil. But they must know how the devil works upon them. The devil puts evil thoughts in people's minds. Here we particularize. The children must know that evil thoughts and desires come from the devils. They must learn to pray for help to resist these temptations. They must also know that the devil uses evil men to effect his purposes. To impress this upon them we mention the persecutions of the Christians by the pagans. Thus they learn that the opposition to good in the world comes from the devil. Then to show the devil's effrontery we mention our Lord's temptation.

Heaven. The purpose of our teaching is to assist the children to realize the truth. Here we would impress upon them the truth of eternal life. Our angle of approach is the visible world. The same loving Father that created this beautiful dwelling place for us and filled it with good things has prepared an eternal home for us in heaven. Ever the children must be led to compare this world with eternity. They must reflect that this life is but a preparation for eternal life. When we die we are going home with joy to our heavenly Father. If, then, this world, in which we are to live for a short time, is so beautiful, what

must be that world in which we are to live forever! Then, as ever, we must make our teaching concrete. Heaven is a place of love and happiness; there we will be with God, the angels, the saints. We will be with our loved ones, our parents, our brothers and sisters, our friends.

After the resurrection, we will also have our body in heaven. Then we will be young and beautiful. We will have all that we can desire. Our body will be glorified; we will be filled with glory; we can move with the swiftness of thought.

But the child must realize that the soul will still live after death! It must know the true meaning of immortality. We will then still be able to know, to will, to remember, to love. Then to think that all the joy and the happiness of heaven will last forever!

In heaven there will be no sickness, no sorrow, no death. We will see God face to face. We will talk with God. We will talk with the Blessed Virgin, with the angels, with all the saints, with our dear ones. Thus the children will learn to meditate upon the joys of eternal life. It will become, as behooves it, a salutary influence in their lives.

Hell. After the treatise on heaven, very properly follows that on hell. To approach this subject we recount the fall of the angels. Now

the children can appreciate better what the angels lost by their disobedience. They should now be induced to reflect on the eternity of hell and the sufferings of the damned. But always the love and mercy of God are kept before their minds. God is ever ready to pardon the sinner. All He asks is that the sinner repent of his sin. They must be impressed with the loss of the damned who will never see God. Hell must be presented as a reality to them. However, we must ever observe delicacy toward the children in this regard, following the "rule of positives."

In speaking of heaven we always refer to the children by direct address; but we speak of those who go to hell as impersonal. Thus we show respect for the children and observe the law of charity toward others. Then, too, when we mention sinners, we always lead the children to express their wish to pray for them, ever impressing upon them the love of God. In their charity they should pray that the sinner be converted and love God. In the end the children should reflect that God loves all men; He wants them all to go to heaven. He helps them, gives them His grace. Hence those who go to hell, go of their own fault because they refuse to accept God's love.

CHAPTER XVI

The Commandments; First — Third

Early in life children should assume the proper attitude toward the Commandments. Much indeed depends upon the manner in which men view these divine regulations, because rational beings normally demand rational motives for their actions. To acquire the proper motives for keeping the Commandments we must understand aright the purposes of God when He gave them. Why, then, did God impose these laws upon mankind? Are they merely an arbitrary expression of divine authority? Are they mere penal laws? Are they useless, rigorous, vindictive rules given in opposition to human nature?

No; they are none of these. They are an expression of divine love; they manifest the love and solicitude of a loving Father for His children. They were given solely to direct us in loving God. That is all. They form the law of love. Christ expressed it in those two Commandments of love: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and

with thy whole mind. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (St. Matt. 22, 37).

It is thus the Commandments must be presented to the children. They must learn to see in them an expression of God's love for us. God is our heavenly Father. Hence He must act as good parents act toward their children. He must be solicitous for our well-being; He must desire to have us with Him. This He does; He has prepared heaven for us; there we will dwell with Him forever. Now He shows us the way to heaven. He defines the line of conduct which we must follow if we would attain eternal happiness. In His love he lays down for us the rules of virtue and morality. But we must realize that these rules of conduct are eminently reasonable. No other law could be conceived that would prepare men for an eternity of love. No other form of morality could be invented; for no standards other than those established by the Commandments could develop the nobility of man and prepare him for union with God.

This truth must become a firm conviction in the minds of the children. They must know that God asks no vain service, no useless observance. In the first three Commandments God tells us to serve Him. It is the service of love, not the

servitude of a slave for his master. In no other conceivable manner could we show our love for God. In the remaining seven Commandments God asks us to regulate our conduct so as to show due consideration for our fellow man. By this means alone can we show our love for others. And should we not show love for others? We are all destined to dwell together in everlasting love. God loves all men. Shall we not love those who are beloved of God? Our teaching must lead the children to conceive the Commandments of God in this manner. Then we may hope that God's law will appeal to their will, to their emotions, as well as to their intellect.

In our procedure we should assist the children to realize that the Ten Commandments are really given by God. The story of Moses as a child, and later as the leader of his people, furnishes a narrative that will make an interesting introduction to the Commandments. But to approach the spirit of the subject, turn their minds to their own relations with God. They are the children of God. He is their heavenly Father who has done so much to help them be good. He gave them parents, guardian angels, divine revelation, the Church, and now the Commandments. All this He has done because He loves us and

would guide us to heaven. The Commandments point out to us the road that leads to our true home.

To keep the Commandments of God makes us happy even here on earth. For indeed none other than good people are really happy in this world. God gave us the Commandments because we have free will. Those alone who have a soul can keep commandments. The dumb animals have no commandments. But we are superior creatures, capable of observing the will of God. We need God's grace to keep the Commandments; this the children must realize. We pray for God's grace so that we will be able always to keep the Commandments. We show our love for God when we keep the Commandments. It was thus the saints showed their love for God. We make this teaching concrete for the children, leading them to reflect upon those things which they can now do to serve God and thus to show their love for Him. Thus the Commandments are presented to the children in a setting of divine love. This is the true concept of the Decalogue.

The *First Commandment* bids us honor God as our Lord and Creator. We serve God because we love Him; we worship God to honor Him and to express our devotion for Him; we venerate

the angels and saints because they are dear to God. To prepare the minds of the children for the First Commandment we turn their thoughts to the works of creation. After considering the wonders of the created world and God's position in the universe, they will readily comprehend the meaning of those words: "I am the Lord thy God."

They should now grasp the idea of worship. They should realize that worship is a necessary sequence of our relation to God. We owe to Him all that we have and all that we can hope to have. We must acknowledge His divine bounty; we must thank Him; we must render Him homage; we must pray to Him; we must believe in Him, love Him, and serve Him. But the pagans worshiped false gods; they made gods from wood and stone; they even worshiped devils. In view of this, the children will easily understand those other words: "Thou shalt not have strange gods before me."

Sacrifice is the highest act of worship that can be shown to God. Hence they must know the meaning of sacrifice. The idea is not introduced in the first course. There we prepare the children's minds for it. Later we lead them to consider the sacrifices offered from the time of Adam to Calvary. Thus they arrive, by a natural

progression of ideas, at the concept of the Sacrifice of the Mass.

Here especially the children learn the meaning of faith, hope, and charity. First the reality is presented to them. From this the idea is engendered in them. When, then, they learn the term they know its meaning. They learn first that they must believe all that God has taught us by revelation and the Church. It is then only that they learn that this means to have faith. Thus, too, they learn to reflect upon the goodness of God and His promises. They consider how good God is and how sure they can be that He will keep His promises. This is hope. In the same manner they learn the meaning of charity. This teaching is at once applied for them in the acts of faith, hope, and love.

Thus with the First Commandment are associated the ideas of creation, God's majesty, power, goodness, and love, worship, prayer, honor, adoration, sacrifice, faith, hope, charity, veneration of the saints, and the like. In all we present the matter to them from the standpoint of their own lives.

The *Second Commandment* bids us honor God's name. God's holy name must conjure up to the mind all that is good and holy. Just as the name of mother, in times of trial and sorrow, brings

back memories of tender home love and recalls all that was sweet and ennobling in our early life, so must the name of God move our mind and emotions in the broader spheres of life. The children must learn to love, honor, and respect God's holy name. The mere mention of this sacred name should produce feelings of reverence and devotion in us; it should inspire us to virtue; it should be filled with tenderness for us; it should have a holy and a salutary influence upon our life.

As a sick child calls upon a loving parent, so should we invoke the name of God in times of trial and sorrow. In the hour of joy and success we should pronounce God's holy name with love and gratitude. It is the name from which we should draw strength and courage in our struggles. It should express to us all that is good, holy, merciful, bountiful, loving. In it we should find the cause of our hope, the guarantee of our faith. It should be for us the synonym of love and charity. The sacred name of God should impel us to virtue and devotion: "In the night I have remembered Thy name, O Lord, and have kept Thy law" (Psalms 118, 55). The sacred name of Jesus means Saviour. It is for us the pledge of eternal life: "And all they that love Thy name shall glory in Thee" (Psalms 5, 12). "In the name

of Jesus every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth" (Philippians 2, 10). "For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4, 12).

Blasphemy and profanity are all too common to-day, even among certain Christians. Wherefore it behooves us to implant deep in the hearts of the children the motives that will impel them to honor, reverence, and love God's holy name. To prepare their minds for these considerations we lead them to reflect upon the respect we show for those whom we love. We are glad when others speak well of father, mother, sisters, brothers, our friends, priests, bishops, the Pope, the Church.

Thus from the life of the child we proceed to the fatherhood of God. After dwelling upon the thought of His love and bounty, we pass to the consideration of His sacred name and its meaning for us. In detail we lead them to reflect upon all that God's holy name signifies in our lives. Associated with God's name must be all that is good and holy. It should be linked together with all the teachings of faith. Throughout all the centuries it has been held in love and benediction by those who have been faithful to God.

The holy name of Jesus is presented in a beauti-

ful mother picture at Bethlehem. There sits the Blessed Virgin Mary holding her divine Infant in her arms. The imagination can easily travel back and hear her calling Him by that sweet name as she sings Him to sleep. St. Joseph, too, utters that holy name with love and tenderness. Thus our teaching is made concrete. But, as always, our teaching must be applied to the lives of the children. They call upon the holy name at prayer. Boys lift their hats, all bow their heads when the sacred name of Jesus is pronounced. And thus it follows that we should honor all that is bound up with that holy name. It is for this reason that we speak reverently of God's virgin Mother and utter her holy name with love and veneration. By the same token we speak respectfully of the Church, the altar, the sacraments, priests, bishops, and all holy things.

The *Third Commandment* bids us sanctify the Lord's day. This means that one day in the week belongs wholly to God. He Himself has decreed it. On that day we are to lay aside our earthly cares and spend the day in His service. It is not, therefore, a day of recreation and pleasure, as the modern world would have it, but a day set aside by divine ordinance for the worship of God. The letter of the law, defined by the Church, says

that we must hear Mass on Sundays and Holy Days; but the spirit of the law demands that these days be truly sanctified by prayer and divine worship.

Our approach to the idea of the Lord's day is from the days of the week. God allows us to devote six days of the week to our material cares. One day only He asks us to spend entirely for Him. On that day we go, as it were, on a visit to our heavenly Father with whom we hope to dwell for eternity.

The children should here learn to reflect upon the meaning of attending divine services. The church is God's house; we go thither to show our love and devotion for Him; there is offered up the sacrifice of the Mass; there we all unite in prayer and thanksgiving to God. We are bound to go to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days; but it is good also to go to vespers and devotions. The Holy Days are to be kept as are the Sundays. They are special feasts on which to show our love for God, for His blessed Mother, and the saints.

Very early the children must learn to realize the importance of observing the Lord's day. They should know that headaches and bad weather and the like do not excuse them from their duty to attend Mass. They should also have a clear

understanding of the precept to avoid servile work. Here we must enter into particulars so as to give them definite ideas on the matter. They should know that to be forced by necessity to work does not constitute a sin; but even here they should attend divine services in spirit if they are unable to go to church before going to work.

These three Commandments define our direct duty to God. Each of them is a manifestation of God's love. In the service which God demands of us love alone is required. These Commandments are simply means of uniting us with God in love. It is thus the children should conceive them.

As our courses develop we introduce, at every stage, scriptural, historical, and liturgical ideas. It impresses the little ones deeply to learn that the saints and martyrs observed these same Commandments. They, too, worshiped God by faith, hope, and charity. They, too, loved and honored His holy name. They, too, sanctified the Lord's day by attending Mass and by prayer and devotions.

And always we ascribe the faithful observance of the Commandments to the children. We apply the spirit of God's law to their lives. Thus they obey God at the present moment. The

love of God that has been engendered in their hearts prompts them to serve God *now*. If, then, they serve God in the present, from their own interior motives, we may well hope that they will serve Him throughout their lives.

In all they must have the correct mental attitude. They must realize that by means of their service they are showing their love of God. They must reflect that God loved them first and that now they are but returning His love. Thus our teaching must ever lead them to progress simultaneously in knowledge and in love, in faith and in practice. Their lives and their conduct will be the measure of our teaching. If they are devoted to God and His holy law, we know that God has blessed our teaching and made it effective.

CHAPTER XVII

The Commandments; Fourth — Tenth

In the last seven Commandments God has defined our duty toward our fellow men; thus we have divine guidance in our relations to others. Though the Commandments are short and concise, they embrace all the situations of life. These we must develop for the children to enable them to understand the spirit of God's law.

In this simple precept, "Honor thy father and thy mother," is contained the principle upon which human society is based. The family is the unit of society, and the *Fourth Commandment* is God's explicit ordinance to conserve this holy institution. God himself places parents over their children. Parents in the home represent God to their children; they rule them by divine authority. Wherefore the children have both natural and supernatural motives to love, honor, and obey their parents.

The approach to this sublime teaching can readily be made by beginning with the babyhood of the children. Going back in thought to the

days of their infancy they reflect that God gave them to their parents. At the same time, they belong to God. Their parents, then, are taking care of them for God. Here their reflections turn to the home and its many blessings. All this comes from God. He teaches their parents to love them and gives the members of the family grace to love one another. Now comes the opportunity to make the children realize that the Sacrament of Matrimony is the foundation of the Christian home.

Now, too, they can learn the constitution of this little society, the family. The father is the head who rules the members; the mother is the helpmate of her husband. The children obey God when they obey their parents; for it was God Himself who constituted the family. The Catholic Church makes God's will known to parents; it tells them how they are to prepare these children for their eternal abode with God in heaven.

Under the heading of this Commandment the children should be led to consider the ideal Christian home. They must learn to know that love, obedience, kindness, consideration, and generosity make happy homes. They should learn to be cheerful and social in the home; they must

acquire the motives for loving one another; they must learn to speak kindly and in a pleasing voice; they must be gentle at play; they must try to please others; they must be generous and forgiving. In a word, they should learn to be polite in the home. The children should learn to help their little brothers and sisters. They should become interested in the welfare of the home; they should learn to help their parents and to pray for them. The home of the Holy Family might be proposed as a model for their consideration.

Thus are grouped around the Fourth Commandment the ideas of God's love, of home, and happiness. This should engender in the children the proper motives for observing this divine Commandment. Indeed the whole force of religion must be brought to bear upon the moral law and upon each precept thereof. It is thus only that we can hope to make our conduct compatible with our belief and knowledge. If we know God, we must needs love Him; and if we really love Him we will serve Him. Thus the love of God alone should impel us to keep the Commandments.

The *Fifth Commandment*, "Thou shalt not kill," is intended to give us the proper attitude toward

human life. God is the author of our life. Hence He alone has the right to determine the ultimate aim and purpose of our life. God still retains supreme dominion over our life. Wherefore we are responsible to Him for it; we must take proper care of it and employ it according to His divine will. Life is a preparation for eternity. We are here in the service of God, and hence in justice to Him we must respect the life and health of all men. This is the meaning of the Fifth Commandment.

To approach this teaching we go back again in thought to infancy. The same parental care that prompts good fathers and mothers to nourish and clothe their little ones, to spend the night by their bed when they are sick, to guard them from injury and accident, prompted God to give us the Fifth Commandment. He is a loving Father concerned for the welfare of His children. God shows this love and care for all; hence we must respect the life and health and the character and good name of others. And for motives the children learn the true meaning of life; it is the prelude to eternal life; it is a gift of God. Here the children can readily acquire the proper attitude toward the principle of propagation. It is God who wills that babies be born into the world.

Those who are unwilling to take care of these little ones for God break the Fifth Commandment.

Thus, as in the other Commandments, the observance of the Fifth Commandment is based upon the love of God. The treatment of this Commandment embraces the seven corporal and the seven spiritual works of mercy; it also extends to many phases of industrial and social life. Here, too, we must touch upon the doctrine of peace and hope. Men must have hope to enable them to bear the trials and burdens of life. All this must be engendered in the minds and hearts of the children if they are to have the proper attitude toward human life on earth.

The *Sixth* and *Ninth Commandments* express the law of purity and chastity. Of all God's earthly creatures, man alone must control his appetites; all other creatures of earth attain the end for which they were created by satisfying their appetites and desires. But unlike the lower animals, man possesses reason, and he has been given a supernatural destiny. Now God commands him to follow the dictates of reason and to control the appetites of the body. This is the foundation of the Sixth and Ninth Commandments.

But this is also based upon another principle:

God has determined the use and the application of all things that He has created. It is from this principle that we introduce the children to the great precepts of moral purity. They can readily understand that fire, water, food, and the like must be used properly; else they will be harmful, cause pain and suffering, perhaps. Ice cream and cake are inexpressibly pleasing to the child's palate, yet if taken immoderately they will often cause excruciating pains in some little stomach. Why should it be so? It is the misuse of things. Why should the fire burn those little fingers that were placed on the hot stove? There is no other plausible explanation: It was God who determined the use of things. He determined not only the use of the material things around us, but also the use of our mind and our body. And why not? All these things belong to Him.

From these premises it is easy to understand how men can commit sin by mere thought. They are abusing the faculty which God gave them for the contemplation of the good and the true. It is the same with the human body; God has determined the use of all its powers and faculties. To use them in any way other than that set down by God is to abuse them. In the light of this truth, the body is something more than a plaything;

it is an instrument of eternal salvation. The five senses are the avenues by which the beauty of virtue and truth enters our soul. Then, of course, those who make the senses the medium of corruption for their soul, disobey God, commit sin.

It is thus we should present the doctrine of purity. The children, feeling the presence of God in their lives and knowing their true relation to Him, must reflect upon their proper attitude toward their own mind and body. Thus will the command to curb their lower appetites become reasonable to their minds; they will acquire the supernatural motives necessary for the observance of purity. These matters should be treated from a positive standpoint. It is purity, not impurity, that we would teach. Our hope is so to inculcate the principles of purity in their lives that impurity may not enter, just as darkness is banished by light.

There are those who advocate the early enlightenment of children upon the functions of procreation. They say: "Better to get it *properly* from us than to learn it from the indecent conversations of the unscrupulous or the depraved." But alas, this "kindly enlightenment" will not put a stop to the "indecent conversation method." Thus the children will have a twofold source of

satisfaction upon sexual matters, the second of which will undoubtedly become more interesting because of the first. In due time the children will learn that certain functions of life belong exclusively to the marriage state. To act or think contrary to this divine ordinance is to disobey God in a grave matter; it is to commit a mortal sin. With this principle firmly established in their minds the children will be able to judge correctly the surreptitious information they have acquired in the street.

Human motives are not enough for the observance of these two Commandments. Supernatural motives are necessary; for the observance of these Commandments entails the subduing and the control of human nature. Besides these general principles, the children should know the particularized truth of purity. They must learn to understand that these fundamental principles should extend to all their activities of life. They should know just what it means to rule the body by the soul, to practice self-denial, to do penance.

There is indeed reason in penance and self-abnegation, such as the saints practiced, since these help men control their bodily appetites. The saints were prudent indeed when they re-

jected the joys and pleasures of this world, because by so doing they lived more in accord with the spirit, and cultivated to a higher degree the angelic virtue. In the light of this teaching we can understand the philosophy of the Gospel. We can realize better the meaning of Christ's words: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (St. Luke 9, 23).

The *Seventh Commandment* is the law of justice. Through a competent knowledge of this precept the children should acquire the principles of honesty, honor, and trustworthiness. We prepare the children for this teaching by diverting their minds to their own little possessions. Thus they arrive naturally at the idea of possession and thence at the idea of rights. Then they are prepared to learn that our heavenly Father in His desire to protect our rights has given us the Seventh Commandment: "Thou shalt not steal."

In this, as always, we are appealing to their emotions. All the Commandments are manifestations of God's love. Here again is proof: He wants others to respect what belongs to us. Of course this implies that we respect the rights and property of others. To impress the idea of property upon them we induce them to tell us

about those things which they prize most — their toys, their playthings perhaps. From this it is easy to pass to the consideration of private property. Here we take the home as the basis of our reflection. Private property is necessary because of the family. We must have homes; for indeed the home is the abode of the family, and the family is the basis, the unit, of human society.

Again we have an opportunity to cause reflection upon the ideal home; but now from a different standpoint. Around the home can well be grouped all the ideas of justice and honesty. The home, too, is the center of their present life. They can there practice, in the living present, the principles upon which they are reflecting.

It is not merely respect for the things of others that we would here inculcate. We would lead them to consider all the phases of family life, paying rent promptly, avoiding debts, practicing economy, and the like. These matters apply directly to the children in many ways. They must learn to take proper care of their shoes and clothing, keeping them neat and clean. They must keep from breaking dishes and other things in the household. They must learn to keep the house tidy and to avoid wasting food. They must help the poor.

Then the children should consider the particular ideas of justice and honesty. They should learn to avoid cheating, extortion, false weights and measures. They must learn to be honest in their work so that later they may know both how to pay an honest wage if they are employers, and to do honest work if they are employees. They must know their obligation to return lost articles. In a word, they must learn to live as good citizens, respecting the law of the land and the rights of their fellow man. Thus they see that God in His goodness has defined for them the attitude they should take toward the rights and property of others. They see in this God's desire to lead them to eternal life with Him in heaven.

The *Eighth Commandment* lays down the law of truth. God made our intellects for truth. All truth comes from God. God gave us a mind with which to know the truth and the power of speech wherewith to express it. God loves the truth; the devil hates it. When we tell the truth we are obeying God, observing the Eighth Commandment.

Again we consider that God has determined the use of all things; this is our angle of approach. God gave us a soul, a mind, the power to think. Even the truth that two plus two equals four

comes from God's mind. When we tell the truth we are obeying God; we are using our mind and our speech as He intended. But the children must also learn to love the truth. By a knowledge of the truth they shall be saved. God himself revealed the truth to us; He sent the Catholic Church to teach us the truth. The martyrs died out of love for the truth.

The children must learn to tell the truth even in the most difficult circumstances; they must have courage in truthfulness. The example of the martyrs will help them realize this. Truthfulness must become a quality of their lives. They must therefore know that falsehood comes from the devil, the "father of lies." They must understand the evil of calumny and detraction. They must also know their duty to keep confided secrets and to avoid curious seeking into the private affairs of others.

Again we have a manifestation of divine love in this Commandment. This must always be the motivation for the observance of the Commandments. God would have us love the truth; for thereby we will obey Him and be guided by Him on our way to our true home in heaven. It is always the loving Father guiding His children.

The *Tenth Commandment* expresses the law of

contentment. God gives us all that we have! He would have us be contented even though others possess more than we; He knows best what is good for us. Then, we are not to expect complete retribution here but in eternity.

We prepare the minds of the children for this teaching by inducing them to reflect upon our relation to God. God is our Father; we are all His children. Hence we are all like brothers and sisters who love one another. If God is so good, why, then, should we envy others what God has given them? God permits some of His children to be poor so that those who have more can help them. It is thus God cares for all His children.

In this Commandment we lead the children to consider all the phases of contentment and prepare them to avoid all the channels of envy. To do this we must induce the children to reflect upon the proper attitude toward the things of this world. They must learn in their early years to keep from setting their hearts upon material things. They must learn that virtue alone can bring peace and contentment in this world. Hope must be engendered in their hearts, hope of eternal bliss with God. Thus they will be contented amidst the inequalities that confront them in this world. They will find their joy in their

love of God and in their hope of being united with Him forever. They will be happy in keeping God's Commandments.

Thus the Commandments will be woven into the lives of the children. They will form the motivation of their conduct. A supernatural element will have been assimilated in their lives. They will look upon the moral law, expressed in the Ten Commandments, as a means of showing their love for God. By this means they will have assumed the proper attitude toward the moral life.

CHAPTER XVIII

Sin — Original Sin

Sin is a great problem. Men of the world differ greatly in their concepts of this fundamental evil; some would limit its meaning to that of a mere social offense; others call it a mere blunder in life. Then there are many who deny its existence, maintaining that virtue is its own reward and vice its own punishment.

Furthermore, sin is the nodus of the harassing problem called the "problem of evil." Why, they ask, did not God make men and angels so perfect that they could not sin? Indeed God knew, when He created men and angels, that they would fall into sin; He knew that many of them would be condemned to hell for eternity; He knew that sin would bring misery and death upon the human race. How, then, could an infinitely good God who is, at the same time, infinitely powerful admit the possibility of this unspeakable evil in His creatures? God is a loving Father to His rational creatures. How could He allow the thought of sin to enter the minds of His noblest creatures?

It were, seemingly, as if an earthly father allowed a deadly serpent to lie coiled in the midst of his little ones.

This is the problem which unaided reason has never been able to solve. In vain have men denied the existence of God; in vain have they invented the demiurge, father of evil; the problem of evil is still unsolved to them. Moral evil or sin is the only real evil in the world. Other evils, physical and intellectual and material, are but relative evils; they are the product of moral evil. Wherefore our children must know not only the meaning of sin, but they must understand also the principles by which to withstand false ethical ideas.

Sin, considered apart from God's love, mercy, and justice, is an enigma. In other words, if we are first convinced that God loves us, we will believe firmly and constantly that God, in His own infinite wisdom, knows how to bestow His divine love upon creatures capable of sin. In like manner we know that there is no contradiction between the infinite mercy and justice of God and the possibility of sin in man.

To those who have truly known God the problem of evil has never been a stumblingblock. For, knowing God, they loved Him; and loving Him,

they believed in Him and served Him. It is true, the greatest saints have groaned under the misery of sin. Says St. Paul: "There was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan, to buffet me. For which thing thrice I besought the Lord, that it might depart from me. And He said: My grace is sufficient for thee; for power is made perfect in infirmity. Gladly therefore will I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may dwell in me" (2 Cor. 12, 7–9). God's grace is sufficient for us; yet we do not comprehend the inscrutable ways of God. To mere human reason it would seem advisable to abolish the very possibility of moral evil. But that same reason tells us that God is infinitely good and bountiful; wherefore we must trust in Him. We know that whatever He does is best.

In the light of these facts we must present the doctrine of sin to the children very circumspectly. We must first so imbue their minds and hearts with God's love and tenderness that the "problem of evil" can never rise to haunt them. They must learn so to trust in our heavenly Father that the thought of injustice can never be associated with Him. They must learn to reflect that the ways of God "are inscrutable" (Romans 11, 33) and that many problems of life will be solved in

eternity alone. They must realize that God has not seen fit to reveal to us the mystery of moral evil and eternal damnation. With this attitude of mind they will be prepared to cling to God and combat the very thought of sin.

Sin must ever be presented as disobedience against God; any thought, word, or deed contrary to God's law is a sin. Those who commit mortal sin turn away from God; they lose God's grace. Those who die in mortal sin go to hell where they will be separated from God forever. God is always willing to forgive repentant sinners. Venial sin diminishes our love for God and puts us in danger of committing mortal sin. The devil tries to lead people into sin so as to take them away from God. Sin is the worst evil in the world. Happy are those who avoid sin all their life.

This is a synopsis of the teaching on sin. Our approach to this teaching is through the knowledge of God's love and care for us which already exists in the minds of the children. For God we are administrators of material things — of our body, our soul, our life. He determines the use to which all things are to be put. He guides us to eternity by His fatherly care. To attain heaven we must obey God; we must lead a virtuous life; we must be good. Sin makes people

bad. Those who disobey God commit sin. The bad angels disobeyed God; they refused to do His will; this was a mortal sin. This changed those beautiful creatures into devils and sent them to eternal damnation.

We induce the children to reflect upon the effects of sin; thus they learn to know its meaning. Adam and Eve disobeyed God and hence committed a sin. See the awful results that followed. It was pride that caused the fall of both angels and men. God simply wished to have them love Him and loving Him they would, of course, obey Him, serve Him. But the bad angels, and Adam and Eve, and sinners in general conceived the thought that they could get along without God. This is pride, the root of all evil.

It is pride that causes people to break the Commandments and hence to disobey God. But this is a generalized truth; to make it clear to the little ones it is necessary to mention each Commandment in particular. We must give concrete examples to enable them to comprehend the meaning of sin. Here especially the "rule of positives" should be observed. Sin should always be mentioned in the impersonal. Not for an instant, even hypothetically, should the idea of sin be associated with the lives of the children.

Our teaching on sin should form motivation for the practice of virtue. With the idea of sin should be associated all that makes for misery and unhappiness. But side by side with this, the beauty and the joy of virtue should be suggested. After dealing with the hateful subject of sin the little ones should be filled with the desire to lead good and holy lives.

Gradually, by easy steps as it were, we should lead the children to see the difference between mortal and venial sin. They should realize that it is the malice of forethought that makes sin mortal and that mortal sin entails a serious matter. On the other hand, they must learn that venial sin arises from a certain thoughtlessness in slight matters. To enable the children to realize this distinction much patient care is necessary. Concrete examples will best serve here, perhaps. No generalized definition will suffice for either children or adults.

It is sometimes difficult for people to comprehend sins of thought. It must here be impressed upon the children that to harbor evil thoughts is the misuse of the mind and hence disobedience to God. But all this presupposes that they know God's position in their lives. To be able to realize the meaning of sin the children must learn the

proper attitude toward life; they must feel the loving presence of God about them; they must be happy in the hope of eternal bliss with Him in heaven. Hence even our teaching on sin must suggest the love of God to the minds of the children. In sin and its punishment they must see God's desire for our love. They must understand that sin is a willful separation of disobedient children from a loving Father. And the punishment that follows is the direct result of their refusing to accept God's love.

Original sin is the sin which we inherit from our first parents, the disobedience of Adam and Eve which first separated man from God. This subject follows logically after our treatise on sin in general. It is, as it were, going back to seek the origin of human sin. The divine account of man's fall is even ridiculed by many to-day. It is sometimes placed in the category of myths and ascribed to the phantasies of prehistoric man. Yet the whole fabric of revealed religion rests upon the truth of this spiritual narrative. Without the fall of man there would be no redemption, no Christianity. The truth of man's fall related in Genesis is known to us by faith. To him who believes in God and His holy Church there can be nothing mythical in Genesis or any other part

of the sacred writings. Hence it is ours to present this great truth to the children in the light of divine faith. In this light all becomes reasonable and consequential.

God made man to be happy with Him forever in heaven. All he asked was that man should love Him. He put him on earth so that he could prove his love for God. Of course the only way in which man can show his love for God is by obeying Him. Hence God gave Adam and Eve a commandment; if they obeyed God by keeping this commandment, they would prove their love for Him. Then later God would take them to heaven. But Adam and Eve disobeyed God and thus lost their innocence and holiness. Because of their sin they became subject to many miseries of soul and body. These evils have come down to all the children of Adam and Eve and even to us, and the sin which we inherit from them is called original sin.

This outlines the teaching on original sin. The children have already learned man's origin from God and his relation to Him. They have long been considering His love and bounty to us. From this point of contact we can easily introduce to them the subject of original sin. After reviewing the ideas of sin we take them back in thought to the beginning of the human race.

There they see the great love God bestowed upon our first parents. They understand the reason for the command given to Adam and Eve; they consider the envy of Satan; they see pride working in the mind of Adam and Eve. Then they see the act of disobedience which separated them from God.

Now their thoughts are turned to the miseries of life which are not unknown to them. All these are the consequences of that sin. Furthermore, heaven was closed because of that sin. Then concretely they are led to realize the condition of Adam and Eve after the fall. The children of Adam and Eve were born in the same condition. All men, save the Mother of God, have since been born in that condition. We, too, are born in that condition, which is called original sin.

Throughout the whole treatise the love of God is made manifest to the children. God had originally made man for heaven; He warned him against disobedience, telling him its consequences. But man turned away from God, led by the devil. He gave himself into the power of Satan, became his slave. Here God in His love promised him a Redeemer who was to be His own divine Son. Even there in the Garden of Eden God made this promise to Adam and Eve so that all might

still have hope. All this must be impressed upon the minds of the children so that they will have the proper attitude toward God in this regard. All the evil in the world must be associated with sin just as good is associated with God.

There is no need for rationalizing in the presence of love. It is through love that the little ones will know and understand the mysteries of faith. Knowing that God is a good and loving Father to us, they will see His justice and His mercy even through the greatest evils of life. They will judge all the truths of faith through the medium of love. Thus they will understand the mystery of sin. They will know that God in His love and mercy has done all for His children of earth.

CHAPTER XIX

The Incarnation

In the beginning of our course we reflected upon God, our heavenly Father. We reflected upon our relation to Him, our origin from Him, and His divine Providence over us. After considering God as He is revealed in the created world and in the sacred Scriptures, we turned our thoughts to eternity, dwelling upon the destiny which God has in store for us. From these considerations we turned, quite naturally, to meditate upon God's law, expressed in the Ten Commandments. Then we passed logically to the consideration of sin, man's rebellion against God. When we had viewed this appalling evil in all its aspects, we then centered our reflections upon the origin of man's sinful state — the fall of man.

Logically upon these ideas follows the treatise on man's redemption. We would now lead the little ones to know and feel the love and mercy of God manifested in the Incarnation. The whole human race was in a state of sinfulness because of Adam's fall. God had promised Adam and

Eve that He would send His own divine Son to redeem mankind from sin. God had taken pity on poor, fallen man; in His infinite love and bounty He would restore to him the eternal inheritance which he had ruthlessly cast aside by his disobedience.

All this must be impressed upon the children. Then they must follow, with heart and mind, the long years of waiting for our divine Redeemer. They hear again the words of the Prophets foretelling the coming of our Saviour. At last they are taken, in thought, to Nazareth, there to hear the Angel Gabriel announcing to the Blessed Virgin Mary that she was to be the Mother of our divine Redeemer. In the same realistic manner we transport them in fancy to Bethlehem, there to kneel beside the crib of our new-born Saviour. With their vivid imagination they accompany the shepherds as they hasten across the fields to adore their Infant Redeemer. They see in wonderment the arrival of three wise men from the East bearing gifts to the Christ Child. They shudder at the wicked threats of Herod and mourn the slaughter of the Holy Innocents as they follow, in the still night, the course of the flight into Egypt.

Thus we lead them on, their mind and heart

and imagination all aglow with the thoughts and the scenes that are presented to them. It is all made personal for them; they live again those great events of religion. They weave all that love and truth into their own life. All is made simple and concrete for them. The progress of their thought is easy and agreeable to them. When in spirit they are kneeling before the crib of our Infant Redeemer, their thoughts are turned to the blessings that Blessed Babe brought to us; He it was who came to free us from the power of Satan, to save us from hell. And that longing desire to take Him into our arms is now satisfied by the Holy Eucharist. At Holy Communion we can now take Him even into our bodies.

To them now the true meaning of Christmas becomes manifest; it is the birth day of our Saviour; it is a time of joy because it is the day on which our Blessed Redeemer came into the world. Henceforth their thoughts may easily travel back to that happy Virgin Mother holding her divine Babe in her arms. It is but meet that here they should turn their thoughts to the blessed Mother of our divine Saviour. She must take her place in their lives. They must learn to know her as the Mother of God and as our Mother.

From that blessed day on which they saw the

angel of God bowed before her until they saw her sainted body borne to heaven they must follow her whole life. Like the life of Christ, the life of His blessed Mother is presented to them in a series of pictures, as it were, that appeal to their heart and their imagination. First they are led to Nazareth; after the Annunciation, they go into the hill country with the Blessed Virgin to visit her cousin, St. Elizabeth. At Bethlehem they see her holding her Blessed Babe to her bosom, hugging Him, kissing Him, crooning Him to sleep. They see her putting on His little garments, washing His little hands and face, feeding Him, caressing Him, watching over Him in His crib. In these scenes the dear St. Joseph is always present. Such tenderness of mother love is familiar to children.

It is by these manifestations of love that to children mothers are mothers. By the same signs they will realize the divine motherhood of Mary. At Nazareth they see, in thought, the Blessed Virgin caring lovingly for her Blessed Boy. They see Him playing about as she sweeps the house, washes the dishes, prepares the meals. In imagination the children are transported thither and feel almost as though they might play with the divine Boy of Nazareth.

They consider well the life of the Holy Family in its little cottage there. They follow those three holy persons in the detail of their everyday life. In this they learn the secret of peace and joy. Not only do they learn the beauty of these simple lives, but they realize the true meaning of God-made-man. They consider the thirty obscure years which our divine Lord spent in that little home with His blessed Mother and St. Joseph. They see again reënacted the holy death of that great saint, assisted in his last hour by the Saviour of the world and his own Virgin spouse.

They feel the sorrow of those two sacred hearts when at last Christ leaves His blessed Mother to go forth upon His mission. With awe and love they follow our divine Saviour in His journeys of love and mercy. They see Him cure the lame, the deaf, the blind, the sick; they see Him raise the dead to life; they hear His holy teachings; they are there, in spirit, when He calls His twelve Apostles. At last they find Him falsely accused by the jealous Pharisees. Their hearts are with Him when he prays in the agony of Gethsemane. In the midst of their thoughts Judas comes followed by a band of soldiers who bind Him and lead Him away. They watch as He is taken before Pilate and hear the rabble cry: "Crucify Him,

crucify Him!" Then with sympathy and love they follow Him through the streets of Jerusalem as He bears His heavy cross toward Calvary. In the end they see Him stripped and fastened by big nails to the cross. With the Blessed Virgin they stand there through the long hours beneath the cross until He breathes forth His spirit.

Thus the truth lives for the children; it has a meaning in realities for them; it appeals to their tenderest emotions; it touches their hearts; for they are absorbing it in its own sacred character. Yet it is not enough for them to know and feel this sacred truth; they must also practice all that it entails. When they reflect upon these manifestations of God's love for them, they must simultaneously consider the means by which they can show their love for God. They must then recall to mind the practices of religion that bear upon these truths. This teaching must produce immediate fruits in their lives.

Their consideration of the Holy Family should awaken in the children a desire to make peaceful and happy homes. Here their minds should be directed in the quest of those things by which they can contribute to the joy of their own homes. In this juncture also they should reflect upon the means by which to show their love for one another.

While dwelling upon the life of Christ and His sacred Passion, their thoughts are directed to the feasts and devotions of the Church that commemorate these events. For instance, they follow the Stations of the Cross while they are considering the Passion. While their minds are filled with the thought of Christ's blessed Mother, they consider the means which they have to show their love and devotion for her. They talk of the prayers and litanies they can say in her praise. They recall the feasts that are celebrated in her honor. Thus is interwoven for the children a beautiful network of truth, love, and practice which is immediately applicable to their lives. Knowledge is so engendered as to produce love, and love is so strong that it impels them to practice.

After considering the crucifixion of Christ, we turn to reflect upon death and purgatory. Death has already been presented to them in its true light; it is for them just a "going home" to our heavenly Father. This is the only teaching that can harmonize the fact of death with divine love. We are all children of a loving Father in heaven; He leaves us here on this earth simply that we may learn to love Him. In the end He takes us to our true home in heaven, to our Father's bosom.

After reflecting on the death of Christ, the minds of the children are prepared for the true consideration of death. They are now led to think upon the meaning of death. The body is placed in the tomb; the soul still lives; the wicked are condemned to hell. The just go to heaven to be with God forever. The children have already seen death among their own or among their friends. What is the meaning of this separation? Why should they be torn from those whom they love? Is this the end of love? All these questions arise in desolate minds. Because of these questions, we treat the subject of purgatory in conjunction with death. Because of purgatory we can still manifest our love for our beloved dead; every prayer said for them is an act of love shown for them. This is a great consolation for sorrowing hearts.

Purgatory is, after all, a product of God's love and mercy. It is as such it must be presented to the minds of the children. God, because He loves us, has given us this place wherein our souls may be purified for heaven. The children readily grasp the true meaning of purgatory. In this connection we help them understand the Communion of Saints mentioned in the Apostles' Creed. It is that sublime doctrine of faith:

the faithful on earth, the souls in purgatory, and the blessed in heaven are all united in mutual love. Here the children reflect upon means of helping the poor souls. They learn that they can help them by prayer, by good works, and by having Masses said for them. They learn about the Feast of All Souls and the month of the poor souls. As usual it is the commingling of practice with truth.

But, for the faithful, the hope of resurrection takes the sting out of death. Hence, at once, we take up the subject of Christ's Resurrection. Here, as in the other chapters on the Incarnation, our approach is historical — built upon the previous knowledge of the child. Again they follow our divine Redeemer to Calvary and finally see His lifeless body placed in the tomb; they see the military guard placed beside the sepulchre. Then on the morning of the third day their imagination pictures for them Christ coming forth alive from the tomb. The details of this event are depicted in their minds. Mary Magdalen goes to the tomb early in the morning, sees the risen Christ, and hastens to tell the Apostles. Then St. Peter and St. John come running to the tomb.

Already the guards have taken to flight in their fear. The high priests offer them silence money.

Then Christ appears to the Apostles, passing through closed doors. All this is vivid reality to the children. When they have followed all these events, they realize the truth of the Resurrection. They are prepared then to consider the divine power by which Christ rose from the dead. In the midst of these narratives that are drawn from the children, as it were, the appropriate feasts and liturgical celebrations are brought to their minds. Lent and its devotions, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter, are here given their full meaning for the children.

From Christ's Resurrection there is a natural transition to our own resurrection at the end of the world. Hence the children are led to reflect upon that glorious consummation when our bodies will rise from the dead. Thus truth is linked to truth in the course of our teaching. The interest of the children is sustained from day to day; for each treatise suggests the subsequent topic, making it almost a demand of the problems that have been awakened in the minds of the children.

Throughout these chapters on the Incarnation, God's love has been made manifest to the children. The mystery of the Incarnation becomes for them an article of fervent faith. They follow eagerly, it would seem, the course of events that

are to them so human and yet divine. In it all they see the loving familiarity of God with His children; they see God the Son coming down from heaven to lead God's children back to the path of truth and salvation. In this manner the teaching works upon their lives; it brings conviction to them and moves them to deeds of love.

CHAPTER XX

The Catholic Church — Divine Grace

Next in order to the Incarnation and the Redemption the Church naturally presents itself to our consideration; for the Church was instituted to apply the fruits of the Incarnation and the Redemption to our souls. To the Church Christ committed the means of grace for mankind. Wherefore the treatises on divine grace and the Sacraments logically follow, in due succession, the treatise on the Church.

The salvation of men depends largely upon their attitude toward the Church. They must know its place in the divine plan of Redemption; they must learn to look upon it as a divine institution guided and preserved by the direct intervention of God; they must understand its universality as the sole divinely constituted teacher of mankind. Hence, from the beginning, the little ones must conceive the proper attitude toward the Church. It must take its proper place in their life, naturally, logically, as it were. To accomplish this we do not await the particular treatise on the Catholic Church.

Early in our first course we introduce the children to the Church. After we have presented to their minds God as He manifests Himself in creation, we consider Him from the standpoint of divine revelation. When the children have learned that God spoke to us through the Patriarchs and the Prophets and through Jesus Christ and the Apostles, we lead them to consider that wonderful book written by God Himself — the Bible. This brings them face to face with the Church. There must be a link between us and that far-off time when God spoke and wrote the truth for us. The little ones are even eager to know how those teachings are transmitted through all the centuries to all the people of earth. An intervening teacher is necessary; they have at least an implicit desire to know how God has accomplished this work of teaching.

The Catholic Church is this teacher; God sent the Catholic Church to teach us all this truth that He has so bountifully revealed. Thus the Church is first presented to them; it fits in with God's plan of salvation. Henceforth we cannot mention salvation or the means to attain it without referring to the Church. For the Church must always be associated with all that has to do with the attainment of eternal life. If we speak of the

angels, it is the Church that tells us about them. If we consider heaven, it is the Church that gives us the means to attain it. As for hell, the Church teaches us how to avoid it. It is the Church that teaches us the Commandments of God given to guide us to eternal life; it is the Church that warns us against sin and cleanses the soul of the sinner by her holy Sacraments. Thus the Church appears in every phase of religion; we consider it in conjunction with all truth: for it is "the pillar and ground of truth" (I Tim. 3, 15).

Now we arrive at the especial consideration of the Church. Our approach is historical. The children have been reflecting upon the details of the Passion and the Resurrection of Christ. They saw Him appearing to the Apostles and to many others for forty days. At last they see Him ascending into heaven from Mount Olivet. What follows now? Christ had promised to send the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth. The Apostles went down from Olivet, and locked themselves in a room where they remained in fear and trembling for nine days. During this time they were praying for the coming of the Holy Ghost. This, then, is the origin of the novena to the Holy Ghost. On the tenth day — the narrative continues — the Apostles heard a great noise as of a mighty

wind. Then the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of fiery tongues which stood above their heads. Surely there is action and interest in all this. But why did the Holy Ghost come upon the Apostles?

He came to stay with them to guide them in their teaching. He came to stay with the Catholic Church — long since known to the little ones. He came to keep the truth in the Catholic Church. And who is the Holy Ghost? He is the third person of the Blessed Trinity; He is God who knows all things, sees all things; He is God the eternal and omnipotent. He it is who has come to guard the truth in the Catholic Church and to watch over it until the end of the world. Now we know why the Catholic Church must always teach the truth. Now we know why we must always believe all that the Catholic Church teaches.

After such an acquaintance with the Catholic Church, surely the children will be interested to learn about its origin. Yes; it was Christ who instituted the Catholic Church; it is His own Church; it is the only Church that He instituted. He desires that all the people of the world belong to this Church. He has given us the Catholic Church to teach us to love God and thus to attain heaven.

Here, then, is further evidence of divine love; God in His fatherly love for us gives us the Catholic Church to teach us His divine truth and to help us save our souls. Surely He is a good and loving Father solicitous for His children. He has done this, too, because He wishes to have us with Him so that He can love us for eternity.

With this in mind the children are ready to learn about the organization of the Church. What was the position of the Apostles in the Church of Christ? Yes, little ones, the Apostles were the first priests of the Catholic Church. You know what the priests do for us; they teach us all that God wants us to do. The priest baptized you when you were a baby; he will give you your first Holy Communion; he will forgive your sins in the Sacrament of Penance; he says Mass for you every day; he visits the sick and gives them the last Sacraments.

All these things are known to the children, perhaps. Now in thought they see the Apostles performing these same sacred functions for the people. They are preaching, baptizing, saying Mass, giving Holy Communion, visiting the sick, in a word, fulfilling the holy mission of priests. It was Christ Himself who made them priests; He gave them the Sacrament of Holy Orders. But

He also made them bishops; hence they could give the Sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Orders. They ordained other priests and bishops; these other bishops then ordained still others. Thus the priests and bishops have come down from the Apostles. How simple it all is when traced in its natural sequence!

But we said that the Catholic Church came from Christ; it teaches His holy doctrine; it is His own Church. It is clear, then, Christ is the head of the Catholic Church. He has always been head of the Catholic Church and He always will be such. He it was who sent the Holy Ghost to abide with the Church; He it was who ordained the Apostles to be the first priests of the Catholic Church. And who is our Lord? He is God the Son, the second person of the Blessed Trinity. Yes; God Himself is head of the Catholic Church. That is why all should belong to it. We know now, too, why it will last to the end of the world.

But what position, then, does our Holy Father the Pope hold? He rules the Catholic Church for our Lord. The bishop is the head priest of the diocese; the priests obey him. The Pope is over all the bishops and priests of the Church; all obey him. The Holy Ghost guides our Holy Father in ruling the Church. The Holy Ghost

guides him so that he can always teach the truth to the world. Three hundred millions of people in the world love and obey our Holy Father. He is a kind and loving father to them. We pray for him and ask God to bless him every day.

But, talking of the Pope, who was the first Pope? St. Peter was the first Pope. How naturally we arrive at this great truth. Our Lord Himself made St. Peter the first Pope of the Catholic Church. He was bishop of Rome; since then the bishop of Rome has always been Pope. When St. Peter died, St. Linus became Pope. Then followed St. Anacletus and St. Clement. Beginning with St. Peter there have been two hundred and sixty Popes. How grand is this holy Church of ours!

Surely we are happy to obey this holy Church which God has sent so wondrously to guide us to heaven; we obey God when we obey the Catholic Church. God gave the Catholic Church power to make commandments. When we keep the commandments of the Church we obey God. Those who break the commandments of the Church commit a sin. In this manner the children learn to know the true character of the Church. Knowing it, they love it; and when they love it, they will obey it and profit by its holy teachings.

Divine Grace. In our theologies there is no tract more profound than that which treats of divine grace. There are those who seem to be persuaded that the doctrine of grace is too difficult for the minds of simple folk. This is a deplorable error; for there is no doctrine more simple than that of divine grace. Indeed it is evident that it should be so, since God intended it for even the humblest of His children.

It is true that God's grace is a great mystery. Treated scientifically, from the standpoint of theology, it is beyond the ken of all save theologians. But if it be viewed in its manifestations, viewed from a practical standpoint, it is plain and simple enough for even little minds. The same distinction holds in the knowledge of life. There is nothing more simple on earth than life if viewed from a practical standpoint. Little tots two or three years of age recognize life. If they see a bug lying on its back, moving its legs, they will say: "It is alive." If it be motionless they will conclude that it is dead. But if life be studied scientifically in biology, anatomy, and kindred sciences it is the most profound of human sciences.

Now in teaching religion to our people our first concern is practical knowledge, knowledge that will influence their lives. It is such knowledge

of divine grace that we would convey to the little ones. Divine grace is a new life for our soul. God gave us a natural life to enable us to work out our natural destiny; but He created us for a supernatural destiny. To this end He bestows upon us the life of grace. This life is engendered and nourished in our souls by the Sacraments. This sums up the teaching on divine grace.

To present this teaching to the little ones we make our approach through their natural life. God gives the life in which we are born. Well they know the manifestations of natural life; we eat, drink, talk, walk, work, think, and the like by this life. Yet this is not enough to take us to heaven. To enable us to attain heaven God gives a new life to our soul. This new life gives us power to attain eternal life; it enables us to love and serve God, to avoid sin, to save our soul. Without it none can gain heaven. This new life changes our soul; it makes our soul holy and pure and beautiful so that God can love it; it makes us children of God. Indeed when we have this life we have a share in God's own life. Surely it is a wondrous gift.

Then, too, the manifestations of this new life are as simple as are the manifestations of natural life. Those who keep the Commandments show

that they possess this life. Those who do all that God wills manifest this new life in their soul. In a word, all the works of a virtuous life are manifestations of divine grace. Just as the little one can understand natural life from the least little movement of an insect, so it can understand the meaning of divine grace from the little actions of duty and virtue.

To make the teaching concrete to the children, we cite examples for them. The Blessed Virgin Mary was "full of grace." It was God's grace that made her so pure and holy. It was God's grace that made St. Joseph so good and pure. It was God's grace that made the saints and martyrs so holy. It is God's grace that makes us good.

With all this in mind the children are disposed to learn that divine grace comes to us through the Sacraments. Indeed the Sacraments now become necessary, in a sense, to the minds of the children. For they would know how God's grace comes into our souls. Our Lord gave us the Sacraments to bring His grace to our souls. How simple it is when approached from this angle. There can be no question about the divine origin of the Sacraments; it is quite to be expected that God should establish means for bringing His

grace into our soul. Now the children will be prepared to consider the Sacraments. They can now view them from a practical standpoint.

Thus we see the simplicity of the teaching on divine grace; even little children can readily grasp its meaning; they conceive it as a life; this is practical knowledge for them. Life means action — practice, service in religion. Every act of virtue and religion that we perform is the result of God's grace. This teaching makes manifest the need of divine grace in our lives. When the struggle comes we must turn to the consolation of those words: "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. 12, 9).

CHAPTER XXI

The Sacraments. I

Divine grace has been presented to the children as a new life for the soul. This life is generated and nourished by the Sacraments. We would now lead the children to reflect upon the sacramental life of the Church. We would have them understand the place of the Sacraments in the divine plan of Redemption.

There is much prejudice in the world to-day against the "sacramental system." This prejudice is due largely perhaps to a misconception of the Sacraments. Men are indeed familiar with instrumental causes in all other spheres of life; they accept their existence and their utility without hesitation. The senses are instrumental causes of thought; steam is an instrumental cause of locomotion.

In His work of mercy and salvation, God has also given us instrumental causes; such are the Sacraments. They are the instrumental causes which God has instituted to give grace to our soul. God Himself produces the grace, the

internal effect; He is the principal cause; the Sacraments are His instruments. This mode of action accords with the principle of secondary causes which we see manifested generally in the created world. In the natural order God has given to all living creatures the faculty to reproduce their kind. In this they are always secondary causes; God is the prime cause.

In the order of grace, the supernatural life of man, God works in the same manner. He establishes secondary causes to propagate the life of grace in the world. These are the Sacraments and the ministry of the priesthood — the Church and the Sacraments. When we conceive divine grace as the supernatural life of the soul, the meaning and purpose of the Sacraments become manifest; for there is a striking analogy between natural life and the life of grace.

In the natural order that highly spiritual entity called life is propagated and nurtured by the concurrence of material things. In the same manner God has established the material elements of the Sacraments, such as water, oil, bread, and wine. The application of these material things is called the sign of the Sacrament. It is true that in certain Sacraments the sign is not a tangible object; it is, however, always a perceptible thing. In the

Sacrament of Penance it is confession; in Matrimony it is the expressed contract; in Holy Orders it is the transmission of the instruments. Added to this material or perceptible element in the Sacraments is the form. In Baptism it is: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." In Penance it is: "I forgive thee thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This form expresses the intention of the priest and makes the accompanying action a sacramental action. By divine ordinance, it takes the act out of the pure natural sphere and elevates it to the supernatural; it then becomes a Sacrament.

In the natural order, life must first be generated; then it is strengthened, nourished, healed of its ills, prepared for its mission, fitted for self-propagation, endowed for its destiny. It is thus with the life of grace in our soul. In Baptism we are regenerated, receiving this new life, this participation in God's own nature; in Confirmation this life is strengthened; in the Holy Eucharist it is nourished; in Penance its ills are healed; in Matrimony and Holy Orders its perpetuity is assured; in Extreme Unction it is prepared to achieve its destiny.

The life of a true Christian is, therefore, a sacra-

mental life. When he prays it is to prepare his soul for the fruit of the Sacraments. Good works — virtue, love, devotion — all dispose the soul to profit by the spiritual nurture of the Sacraments. They form the healthy condition of the soul and make it susceptible to the working of divine grace flowing through the Sacraments.

All this outlines the true concept of the Sacraments. Viewed in this light the Sacraments should hold their true position in the lives of our people. Such is the sacramental teaching to be engendered in the minds of the children. They must first realize the meaning of divine grace; then they must look upon the Sacraments as the divinely appointed means of producing and nourishing the life of grace in their soul.

Our approach to this teaching must be, as always, from the life of the children. It must be made gradually by a patient progression of thought. First we take them back in thought to babyhood. They can easily understand that they first received God's grace in Baptism; then it was they became children of God; they were born again; they became members of the Catholic Church. Then they received a new life for their soul so that they could go to heaven. They have already considered original sin. Baptism

takes this sin from their soul. Baptism made their soul pure and holy and pleasing to God; they may now hope to attain heaven. Meanwhile, their minds are turned to that occasion when they were taken to the church to be baptized.

They must ever bear in mind that God gave the Sacraments to the sole care of the Catholic Church. It was the priest who baptized them; their godfather and godmother carried them to the Church. It was our Lord who sent the priest to baptize them. The priest poured water on their head, saying: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

The details of that event are interesting to the children. Their godparents professed faith for them and made promises for them. They are ready now to learn about these things and perhaps to renew them in their hearts. In the end, they must needs feel that the Sacrament of Baptism is but a new manifestation of divine love for us. In this juncture, they learn that even they may baptize in case of necessity. Thus God has bountifully provided for His children so that all may have abundant means of salvation.

Confirmation is the Sacrament in which we receive the Holy Ghost. This is a wondrous Sacrament by which the third person of the

Blessed Trinity comes to dwell in our soul. It makes us strong in faith, makes us courageous and fearless, and fits us for the struggle of a good and virtuous life. In the spiritual order it is the passing from childhood to manhood.

We have also a historical approach to this teaching. The children already know the events of that first Pentecost; for they have seen the Apostles locked in that upper room praying for nine days and yet trembling with fear. Their thoughts have dwelt upon the happenings of the tenth day when the Holy Ghost came upon the Apostles, and they saw them cast off their fears and go forth boldly to preach the Gospel of Christ. In the Sacrament of Confirmation this same Holy Spirit comes to them. He comes to dwell in their soul, to make them strong and fearless; He comes to give them strength to live a good and virtuous life; He comes to make them holy.

Now their thoughts are directed to the consideration of all that the Holy Ghost does for us. He is truly a God with them. Now they will be able to meet the trials and temptations of life. Now they will have strength and courage to serve God and profess His holy name in all situations. They will know how to withstand the scoffs and bitterness of those who ridicule their faith. They

will be prepared to suffer persecution for the love of God. All this will be the fruits of this great Sacrament.

The bishop administers the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Apostles were the first bishops of the Catholic Church. The vivid imagination of the children will readily picture the Apostles giving Confirmation to the faithful of their day. Thus it becomes concrete for them; St. Peter, St. Andrew, St. James, St. John, and the rest are going about administering the Sacrament of Confirmation; it is all realistic for them. When the bishop gives Confirmation he anoints the forehead with holy oil. This is a sign of strength, a sign of the grace conferred. At the same time he says: "I sign thee with the sign of the cross and I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Thus they are led through all the details of the teaching. It is all so clear and simple; it is filled with interest for them; it touches their lives.

The *Holy Eucharist* is the Sacrament of God's love. In this Sacrament Christ gives us His own body and blood to be the nurture of our soul. Here we are united body and soul with the sacred humanity and divinity of our blessed Saviour.

It is the Sacrament which feeds and nourishes the life of divine grace in our soul; it is the tenderest expression of God's love for man. It is the Sacrament of which our divine Saviour said: "Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you cannot have life in you" (St. John 6). The Holy Eucharist, then, is the Sacrament of life — the life of God's grace in our soul. In the divine plan of salvation, it is the means of keeping alive the life of grace in which we are born by Baptism and in which we were strengthened by Confirmation.

We approach this holy subject through its analogy to natural life. As we must eat material food and drink material liquid to sustain the life of the body, so must we partake of this divine nurture to sustain the supernatural life of the soul. The children will follow this line of thought; the food and drink of the Holy Eucharist are our Lord's body and blood. By the power of God bread and wine are changed into our Lord's own body and blood. It is a wondrous truth, yet simple.

But whence comes this great gift, the little ones might ask? Yes, Christ was the first ever to change bread and wine into His body and blood, Christ the second person of the Blessed Trinity,

God the Son, omnipotent, eternal. This took place in Jerusalem at the Last Supper, the night before He died. Every detail of this great event is filled with interest. Seated at table with His Apostles, Christ took bread into His hands, blessed it and said: "This is my body." Then taking the wine, He said: "This is my blood." It was God the Son who did all this; by His omnipotence He changed bread and wine into His own body and blood. How strange, perhaps, to little minds! For they have seen the Blessed Sacrament; it still looks like a piece of bread; it undoubtedly tastes like bread.

Christ, when He performed that wondrous act, did not change the taste and the looks and the shape; now in the Holy Eucharist His body and blood look like bread and wine, taste like bread and wine. He knew how to do this because He is God, the Almighty; it is enough for us to know that He told us. Our eyes and our tongue do not perceive the change; but our mind and our heart know it from the lips of our divine Saviour Himself. He sent the Catholic Church to bring this message of love to us. He entrusted the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist to the Catholic Church so that we might all nourish our souls upon His body and blood.

After Christ had changed bread and wine into His body and blood, He gave His Apostles the power to do the same. He commanded them to change bread and wine into His body and blood. Now we see the Apostles, by the power of God, changing bread and wine into our Lord's body and blood. Then follow the priests of the Church throughout the centuries; they have received the same power; they change bread and wine into our Lord's body and blood; it is thus it comes to us. By this simple progression of thought we arrive naturally at the Sacrifice of the Mass. It is here this miracle of love takes place. The children have seen the priest, clad in the sacred vestments, at the altar saying Mass. What does that mean? He is doing what Christ did at the Last Supper; he is doing what the Apostles did after that; he is changing bread and wine into our Lord's body and blood.

But the Mass is a sacrifice; as such it should be conceived. Here we lead the little ones back to Calvary. There in thought they see again Christ offering Himself for our salvation on the cross; the Mass is that selfsame sacrifice. Here, on the altar, Christ is offering Himself again; He is offering Himself to God the Father. To be present at Mass is like kneeling beside the cross on Mount

Calvary. On the cross our Lord offered Himself in the form of man; here He offers Himself under the form of bread and wine. Now He offers Himself up at all times in all parts of the world; then His lifeless body was taken down from the cross and placed into the arms of His blessed Mother. Now His living body and blood will come to us from the altar to enter into our very breast.

Surely, then, it is easy to understand our obligation to hear Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. We can understand why so many devout souls love to hear Mass daily. Then, too, we realize the attraction which the Catholic Church holds for pious souls. There upon the altar dwells our Eucharistic God. Our living God is there day and night in the tabernacle, really and truly present under the simple form of bread. Our Lord lives there in the Blessed Sacrament out of love for us. We love and adore Christ in the Blessed Sacrament because He is truly God with us. Thus we interweave practice with truth; we apply the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist to the lives of the little ones.

In detail we treat the subject of Holy Communion, and always with reference to the lives of the children. They must here realize the full meaning of the Holy Eucharist to their own little

lives. God, the omnipotent Creator, deigns to come into each little breast. God comes down out of love to dwell among His children under these humble forms. When all this is impressed upon the minds and hearts of the children, they will be ready to consider the dispositions with which they should receive Him. Little by little, they learn to grasp the true meaning of this sacred banquet. Motives are engendered in them; they are impelled by the force of their own love for God to frequent the holy table. It is thus their heart is trained in the love of our Eucharistic God. Impelled by their own motives they will love Him; they will feed their souls upon Christ's body and blood.

The presentation is simple because it is so filled with life. The Holy Eucharist, as the Sacrament of love and of life, appeals readily to the innocent heart of children. With them there is no place for rationalization and proof of doctrine. They sense the workings of divine love; the doctrine of the Holy Eucharist is eminently in keeping with their knowledge of divine love. This is as it should be; our heavenly Father, who is God Almighty, might well be expected to perform such a miracle of love. It is indeed wonderful what He has done for us in the natural order; but

the supernatural order is far above the natural. We are not surprised, then, that He has wrought these wonders of love. Such is the philosophy of the child mind. It is the philosophy of sincerity and simplicity which must have prompted Christ to say: "Unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (St. Matt. 18, 3).

CHAPTER XXII

The Sacraments. II — Judgment

The Sacrament of Penance is medicinal in character; it heals souls diseased by sin; it restores life even in those who have been separated from the Source of life by mortal sin. The Sacrament of Penance is the Sacrament of God's mercy; it is the greatest solace that God has given to sinful mankind. In this holy Sacrament God has established a tribunal of mercy in which the sinner may again be reconciled to his heavenly Father. It is the Sacrament of hope to those who have lost God's grace after Baptism.

The mercy of God is infinite, embracing even the most wicked of sinners. "Wash yourselves, be clean, take away the evil of your devices from my eyes; cease to do perversely . . . if your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow: and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool" (Isaias 1, 16–18). In the Sacrament of Penance God has made mortal man the dispenser of His mercy. The priest is empowered to forgive sins in the name of the Father, and of

the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He is a member of a sinful race who will have compassion on his fellow man. "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that pertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and that err: because he himself also is compassed with infirmity" (Hebrews 5, 1–2).

To obtain God's mercy and to regain his lost, eternal inheritance the sinner need but dispose his soul to receive it. If he will repent and turn away from his sin, God, through this holy Sacrament, will take him back to His bosom; He will be the loving Father to the prodigal son. The sole sign of repentance is sincere confession of sins to God's minister.

It is thus in the light of God's mercy and love that the Sacrament of Penance should be presented to the children. God in His love established the Sacrament of Baptism as a regeneration in the life of divine grace; but sin may rob the soul of this new life. Mortal sin takes away God's grace from the soul, and fallen man is weak and prone to evil. But God takes pity on the weakness of man; in His love He gives him a Sacrament to take away sin from his soul and restore the

life of grace. It is a divine work; our blessed Lord Himself took away sins while He was on earth. It is in keeping with the paternal love of God who is ever eager to save His children.

Now we lead the little ones back in imagination to see the Apostles dispensing God's mercy in the Sacrament of Penance. Our Lord Himself gave them the power to take away sins. The people came to them, confessing their sin, and they forgave them; they were the first priests of the Church. Thus the children are introduced to the ministry of the priest. The power that was given to the Apostles still exists in the Church to-day; the priest forgives sins. It is a power similar to that by which he baptizes; even the forms are strikingly similar. There he says: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here he says: "I forgive thee thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

It is thus the children, by concrete examples, learn to understand the divine ministry of the priesthood. For they see both the Apostles and the priests of to-day acting in the name of God, using God's power to save our souls; they are truly ministers of God.

Then we inculcate the idea of confession to

the children. They have learned that the priest forgives sins in the name of God; he is constituted judge in this tribunal. But who is the accuser? The sinner is the accuser; he makes known his sins to the priest; thus the priest knows what sins he is to forgive. This is the meaning of confession. But confession must have certain qualities; we must tell all our sins; we must tell the number and the character of our sins. This must be brought to the understanding of the children by concrete cases. In these cases we are careful not to refer the sins to the children. What would anybody say if he missed Mass on two Sundays? What would anybody say if he swore once a day for five days? It is thus the idea of confession can be engendered in the minds of the children.

The children have already learned what is sinful. This they have learned from their study of the Commandments and of sin. Now it is necessary only for them to learn the manner of confessing their sins, learn the method, as it were. This will make unnecessary those undesirable tables of sin that have so long harassed the hearts of little ones. In preparing the little ones for confession, we should familiarize them with even the smallest details of the procedure. To kneel, to

bless themselves, to speak through the grille, to know the structure of the confessional, the little step on which to kneel, the slide that the priest will open, to say: "Bless me, father, for I have sinned." All these are of great importance to the little one who enters with palpitating heart, for the first time, into the confessional. Nothing can be taken for granted in this preparation. To listen to the priest, to remember the penance he gives, to know when to begin the Act of Contrition, to know when to leave the confessional might be presumed in adults; but they must be clearly impressed upon the minds of the children.

In the first course the remedial idea of Penance is but slightly touched upon. While it is a striking presentation of this Sacrament, the idea is more abstract than the direct teaching itself. Wherefore this idea is reserved largely for the succeeding courses. Then the children will be able better to comprehend the remedial character of the Sacrament. For the present they conceive the fundamental idea of the Sacrament; to wit, to restore the life of grace to the soul in mortal sin. They arrive at this great truth, not by rationalizing, but by a direct progression of thought on God's love and mercy. To those who know the quality of God's love and His divine

plan of salvation, the Sacrament of Penance follows logically after the Sacrament of Baptism. This is the thought progression through which we lead the children.

The *Sacrament of Extreme Unction* is the Sacrament of the dying; it was instituted to prepare us for our final journey to our eternal home; it is but another expression of divine love for us. Our approach to this teaching is made through the experience of the children. They have perhaps seen the sick and the dying. At least they have heard of them. Knowing as they do all that God has done for us, they are not surprised to learn that God has established a Sacrament for the sick and the dying.

Then it is easy to lead them through the whole process of calling the priest, preparing for his coming, receiving him when he arrives with the Blessed Sacrament, and kneeling by as he anoints the dying person. All these details make our teaching concrete and interesting to them. The children follow in thought every action of the priest. Thus when they meet the reality, it will bear its full meaning to them. When, later, they see the priest putting the sacred oils upon the eyes, ears, nostrils, lips, hands, and feet of the sick person, the action will not seem strange to them. On the contrary,

they will understand what it all means and their hearts will be touched with its meaning.

In the same manner they learn to prepare for the coming of the priest, to prepare the white-covered table, the crucifix, the candle, water, teaspoon; all. It is easy for them to learn these little details. Why should they not know them? Then, too, they learn the reason for kneeling when the priest enters the house; they are adoring the Blessed Sacrament which he is carrying. They learn that the priest hears the sick person's confession; then gives him Holy Communion. The priest gives the sick person three Sacraments; these are called the last Sacraments. In this case, Holy Communion is called Holy Viaticum. How simple it all is when we follow the natural sequence of thought.

Holy Orders is the Sacrament which makes men priests. The priesthood is a great institution. Priests are appointed by God to care for the spiritual welfare of His children, to lead them, in His name, to salvation. The subject of the priesthood is already familiar to the children. In almost every lesson the priest has been mentioned. This is quite natural since the priest is the minister, the active agent of that Church which God sent to convey His grace and truth to us.

Now we would lead the little ones to consider the Sacrament of Holy Orders. To do this we go back to find Christ again with His Apostles, the first priests. Christ ordained them, made them priests; He gave them the Sacrament of Holy Orders. By this same Sacrament men become priests to-day. Then they consider the work of the priest. He administers the Sacraments; he says Mass; he teaches us to do good; he teaches us about God. All this those first priests, the Apostles, did. In a word, the priest is our spiritual father.

The *Sacrament of Matrimony* is the Sacrament by which people marry; it is the foundation of the Christian home; it is the institution by which God provides for the propagation of the human race. It is well for the little ones early to learn the true object of Matrimony. In their minds it should be associated with their father and mother. This will give it a tender and a reverential place in their lives. It was the Sacrament of Matrimony that gave their father and mother grace to love each other, to care for them, their children. Thus this Sacrament touches their lives.

In the development of our courses this teaching will be enlarged. The children will learn to consider the ideal home built upon this great Sacra-

ment. Now they can learn that this Sacrament, like the other six, is given to the care of the Catholic Church. Catholics must be married before the priest. They receive Holy Communion and hear Mass when they are married. This will help them realize that marriage is a holy state, an idea that should grow up with them and remain with them until death.

Judgment is reserved for the end of our course; it is treated here as a summing up of all our teaching. All that has gone before bears directly upon this. The Day of Judgment is the day of final reckoning, the day on which our fate will be sealed for eternity. We will be judged when we die. Happy, then, will be those who have been faithful all their life. Then all their actions will be judged. God sees all that we do every moment of our lives; then He will pass upon all this. If we have done well, if we have been true to Him, our Lord on that day will take us to our eternal home in heaven. But it will be a time of misery and woe for the wicked. Then they will be filled with remorse; then will begin their eternal separation from God; then they shall enter into the company of the devils and descend into the pains of hell. All this is clear and vivid enough for the child mind.

On the last day will take place the resurrection. This idea has been repeatedly presented to them. Now it is described more minutely. They now consider the concrete joys of that glorious consummation. To think that we will have again this very body of ours! It will be strong, young, beautiful, healthy — a glorified body. There is no thought in religion that so appeals to us, perhaps, as this doctrine of the resurrection. The children follow it eagerly.

Thus, too, they picture the Last Judgment with their vivid imagination. There they see all the people that have ever lived, gathered together. Christ appears in His glory. The just are on one side, the wicked on the other. They hear those awful words uttered to the wicked; they hear those sweet words spoken to the just: "Come, ye blessed; possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (St. Matt. 25, 34). They are there with their hearts; they are among the just; they go with Christ to heaven. They consider the joys of heaven; they will be transported with joy at these reflections. Nothing pleases them more than to discuss the wondrous happiness of eternity with them.

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